

# Américas

## Special Poetry Issue

### FEATURES ON POETRY NORTH AND SOUTH BY:

Louis Untermeyer  
Pablo Antonio Cuadra  
Zenobia C. de Jiménez  
Muna Lee  
Manuel Bandeira

### FROM SWEATSHOPS TO SALONS

New York's fabulous  
garment industry

### BULLFIGHT IN CHICAGO

A short story by  
Héctor Velarde

**25**  
cents

*Fashions of 1883  
and 1954 (see page 20)*





# Américas

Volume 6, Number 9

September 1954

*published in English, Spanish, and Portuguese*

## CONTENTS

page	
2	CONTRIBUTORS
3	POETS WITHOUT READERS Louis Untermeyer
6	FIVE VOICES OF SPANISH AMERICA Pablo Antonio Cuadra
9	JUAN RAMON AND I Zenobia C. de Jiménez
12	TRANSLATING THE UNTRANSLATABLE Muna Lee
16	THE SARDONIC BRAZILIANS Manuel Bandeira
20	FROM SWEATSHOPS TO SALONS Lillian L. de Tagle
24	BULLFIGHT IN CHICAGO Héctor Velarde
27	A WORD WITH SARITA GLÓRIA
28	OAS FOTO FLASHES
33	POINTS OF VIEW
36	BOOKS
	AN ENGLISHMAN IN SPAIN Josefina de Román
	CHILEANS AND THEIR LAND Santiago del Campo
	ART BEFORE THE SPANIARDS
40	PRESENTING OUR NEW SECRETARY GENERAL
44	KNOW YOUR DOMINICAN NEIGHBORS?
47	ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT
48	LETTERS TO THE EDITORS
48	GRAPHICS CREDITS

### Published by

Pan American Union, General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, Washington 6, D. C., U. S. A.  
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Subscription rate of AMERICAS: \$3.00 a year, \$5.00 for two years, \$7.00 for three years, for the English, Spanish, or Portuguese edition in the United States and Canada. Add \$1.00 extra for postage to countries outside the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain. Single copies 25c. Address orders to Publications and Distribution Division, Pan American Union, Washington 6, D. C. For information on microfilms of AMERICAS, address University Microfilms, 313 N. First Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

## Dear Reader

Each month through this column Dr. Alberto Lleras has delivered a serious, penetrating message to the thousands of AMERICAS readers. I now have the honor of continuing this personal relationship, as well as the grave responsibility of trying to maintain his high standards. In facing this task, and the Secretary General's countless other duties, I am finding how truly Thomas Jefferson spoke when he said that some men can be succeeded, but never replaced.

As I try to familiarize myself with the Pan American Union, which I knew so well in years gone by, I am more and more impressed by my predecessor's achievements. What used to be a loose association of States is now a full-fledged organization. The four principal departments, with their many divisions and sections, make up an administrative structure that was all but non-existent seven years ago. New agencies and semi-autonomous organizations, with offices in several other nations, have been incorporated into the OAS. The Technical Assistance program was inaugurated in 1950 and since then has captured the imagination of the peoples of this Hemisphere. Under Dr. Lleras' administration and leadership the two most important diplomatic instruments—the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance and the OAS Charter—were negotiated and signed. AMERICAS appeared as a result of the reorganization of the publications program.

Doubtless the pillars that sustained the Pan American Union through fifty-eight years of progress were firm, but it has been Dr. Lleras' responsibility to carry out the fundamental reforms necessitated by the creation of the Organization of American States in 1948. In addition to the legendary white palace, there is a new administration building. The staff and the budget have tripled. But, above all, the enduring faith in the principles of inter-Americanism, which has nurtured this organization through the years, has been strengthened immeasurably. Even with all of this, as Dr. Lleras himself said in Caracas, what remains to be done is almost as important as what has already been accomplished. Thus he left a rallying cry for his successors.

Last month in his message Alberto Lleras referred to the parallelism in our lives: as journalists, diplomats, politicians. I can only hope we also have other characteristics in common. If so, it will be easier for me to grasp the feeling of the work he has done and thus avoid interrupting the flow of vitality that he has infused into the Organization of American States.

*Carlos Dávila*

Secretary General

*Opposite: Coatlicue, Goddess of Fertility and Death. Aztec stone masterpiece about eight feet high, in Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City*

## CONTRIBUTORS

To help plan this special poetry issue of *AMERICAS* we turned to MUNA LEE, who is not only a poet in her own right but also a noted translator of poetry. For many years, Miss Lee has been "Translating the Untranslatable," a problem she discusses in this issue, to make available in English the poetic wealth of other countries of this Hemisphere. To her we are indebted for valuable advice and suggestions to avoid the pitfalls inherent in publishing in the specialized field of poetry. Within the limited space at our disposal, we have tried to give the reader a representative sampling of poetry and critical opinion in this Hemisphere, presented from North to South. Because of space limitations, we have been forced to omit Haitian poetry, which William Jay Smith dealt with so competently in the November 1953 English edition of *AMERICAS*.



One of America's outstanding men of letters, LOUIS UNTERMAYER, tells us about "Poets Without Readers," the unhappy situation of U.S. poetry today. An editor and writer, Mr. Untermeyer has had a personal success with poetry that would seem to belie his theme; his anthologies have been adopted as standard textbooks in high schools and universities throughout the United States. *Modern American & British Poetry* has sold close to a million copies. *A Treasury of Great Poems* has gone into its eighth printing. In fact, most of Mr. Untermeyer's more than sixty books have been devoted to poetry, although others are on travel and legends, or are essays and translations from French and German. Born in New York City, where he still lives, he has been, at one time or another, a manufacturing jeweler, a farmer, and a lecturer. After serving with the Office of War Information during World War II, he became editor of Decca Records, a position he still holds.



After wide travel through North, Central, and South America, Nicaraguan PABLO ANTONIO CUADRA, himself a prominent poet, is well qualified to appraise "Five Voices of Spanish America." Born in Managua in 1912, he studied law at the University of Granada. Mr. Cuadra was one of the founders of the "new poetry" movement in Central America, and his *Poemas Nicaragüenses* was the first book on native poetic themes published there. He has directed a series of literary publications ranging from *Vanguardia* in 1930 to the current *Cuadernos del Taller San Lucas*. A literary and art critic, he has devoted many years to the study of Central American intellectual currents. He is a member of the Nicaraguan Academy of the Language, a branch of the Spanish Academy.

MANUEL BANDEIRA, who wrote "The Sardonic Brazilians" is one of Brazil's most eminent poets. Born in Recife, Pernambuco State, he has lived in Rio since he was ten. He studied to be an architect, but later took up poetry. His first book, showing Parnassian-symbolist influence, appeared in 1917, but his name did not become known until the modernist movement five years later, in which he took an active part. Mr. Bandeira's best-known books are *Libertinagem* (Libertinism) and *Estrêla da Manhã* (Morning Star). He is also the editor of several anthologies, and author of a critical study of Brazilian poetry and a guide to Ouro Preto. Despite the revolutionary quality of his work, he was elected in 1940 to the Brazilian Academy of Letters. He is now professor of Hispano-American Literature at the National School of Philosophy of the University of Brazil.



When LILLIAN L. DE TAGLE, the Chilean member of *AMERICAS*' staff, was a young girl in Germany, she liked to improvise short ballets, for which she wrote the scripts and designed the appropriate costumes. Because her father was a member of the Chilean diplomatic corps assigned to Europe, she was educated in Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland. She began her journalism career on *La Hora*, *Hoy*, and later, *Ercilla* magazine in Santiago. Her New York assignment to write "From



Sweatshops to Salons" was right in line with what is still one of her hobbies. She makes dresses today for her two daughters. Although primarily an architect, HÉCTOR VELARDE is also a writer of short stories, of which his satire "Bullfight in Chicago" is an excellent example. Born in Lima fifty-six years ago, he was educated in Paris. Since then, he has built numerous residences and public and commercial buildings in his home town. An honorary professor at the Lima School of Engineers, Dr. Velarde is also a former president of the Peruvian Architects' Society. His non-technical works include *Kikif*; *Yo Quiero Ser Filósofo* (I Want to Be a Philosopher); *Lima en Picada* (Piquant Lima); *El Hombre que Perdió el Tacto* (The Man Who Lost His Touch); and others. The illustration for "The Bullfight in Chicago" is by the well-known U.S. cartoonist AL HIRSCHFELD, whose work in the pages of large-circulation magazines and newspapers never ceases to tickle the public's funnybone.

In the book section, JOSEFINA DE ROMÁN, who was educated in Spain and now works in the trusteeship division of the United Nations, reviews *The Spanish Temper*, by Englishman V. S. Pritchett. Chilean critic and journalist SANTIAGO DEL CAMPO discusses *Ni por Mar ni por Tierra*, the autobiography of his compatriot Miguel Serrano.

The Organization of American States is made up of 21 American nations—Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Dr. Carlos Dávila of Chile is Secretary General; Dr. William Manger of the United States is Assistant Secretary General.

The work of the Organization of American States is carried out by the Inter-American Conference, which meets every five years in a different American capital; the Meetings of Consultation of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, which can be called by any State to study problems of a political nature, or when the peace and security of the continent are affected by a situation to which the Rio Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance is applicable; and the Specialized Conferences on technical aspects of cooperation. The permanent body representing the governments of the hemisphere is the Council of the Organization of American States, which meets in Washington at the Pan American Union building. This Council, composed of a representative from each of the 21 American States, has three technical organs—the Inter-American Economic and Social Council, the Inter-American Council of Jurists, and the Inter-American Cultural Council.

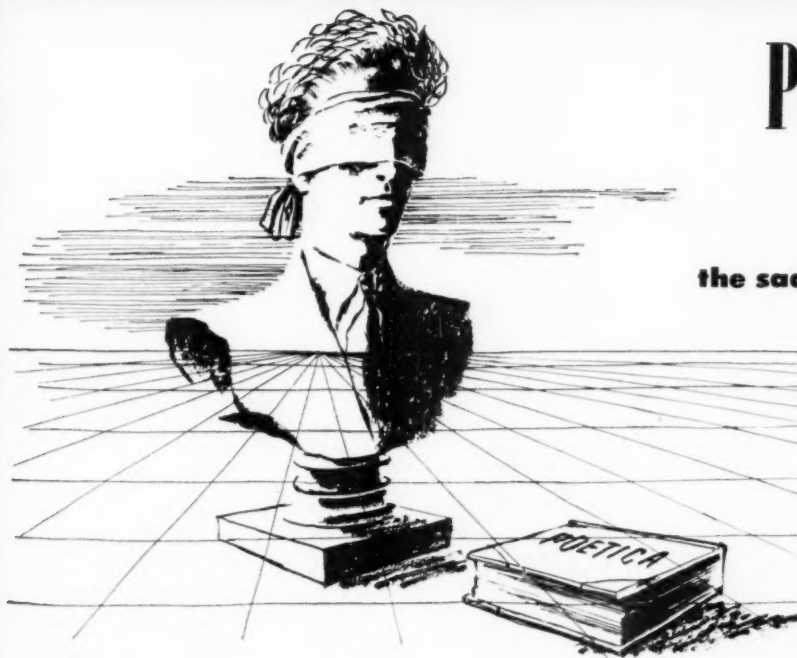
The Pan American Union not only acts as General Secretariat of the Organization, but also carries out many projects of international cooperation in the juridical, economic, social, and cultural fields within the spheres of the respective Councils. The General Secretariat helps in preparations for the Inter-American Conferences, acts as custodian of their documents and archives, serves as depository of instruments of ratification of inter-American agreements, and reports to the Council on the activities of the Organization. Besides *AMERICAS*, a monthly magazine on inter-American affairs, the Pan American Union also publishes the *Annals of the Organization of American States*, an official quarterly which records the documents of the Inter-American Conferences, the Meetings of Consultation, Council, and the other agencies of the Organization; the quarterly *Panorama*, which republishes in full, and in their original languages, outstanding articles from newspapers and magazines; and the *Inter-American Review of Bibliography*.



# POETS

## without readers

the sad state of poetry  
in the United States



Louis Untermeyer

EVEN THE MOST chauvinistic admirer of North American culture must be unhappy about the state of contemporary poetry in the U.S.A. There can be little argument that poetry in the United States is suffering from two opposed extremes: apathy and analysis. The former condition is not only the more prevalent but the more embarrassingly apparent. In most of the countries of Europe and South America, poetry is not only understood but appreciated; what is more, it is popular. There poetry is read by men of action as well as by meditative people, by merchants and mechanics and milliners and miners, with equal interest. When I was last in Mexico, it did not seem surprising that the chauffeur who drove me to Acapulco read from a book of poetry which he carried with him as casually as a newspaper; it was only when I came back to New York that this struck me as an unusual procedure.

The truth is that, in the United States, the common man does not read poetry. When questioned, he will say that he finds modern poetry too difficult or too complex or too full of references which are obscure symbols. But these are only excuses. The average man seems to have neither the time nor the taste for the poets. When he was young he read and "learned" them—Shakespeare and Keats and Browning and Tennyson and Longfellow and, perhaps, even such moderns as Walt Whitman and Emily Dickinson—but he reads them no longer. The tempo of life in these United States and the vast variety of highly competitive forms of entertainment have allowed him to escape from many of the philosophic demands of life and practically all those of literature. For a time it seemed that the appreciation of culture would remain part of everyone's existence. It survived the radio, and it may even survive television. One cannot, however, be sure. Television, which has become the imperative adult toy in practically every household, menaces the future of reading and even threatens to end conversation.

At eighty, unquestionably one of the greatest of American poets, Robert Frost, is still writing, but he is one of the very few who have earned a living by poetry. Almost every other poet in the United States has had to regard the writing of poetry as something of a luxury and has had to turn to some other occupation to keep himself alive. Carl Sandburg, a modern, midwestern Whitman, was an overworked journalist until the great success of his six-volume *Life of Abraham Lincoln* enabled him to "retire" into poetry. Archibald MacLeish, twice winner of the coveted Pulitzer Prize for poetry, is, like many of his fellow poets, a teacher. William Carlos Williams, author of the epic *Paterson* and a humanitarian observer of the minutiae of life ("No ideas but in things") is an obstetrician. Wallace Stevens, author of some of the purest and most transparent abstractions of our day, is vice president of a large insurance company. Merrill Moore, who has written thousands of sonnets ("improvised," "illegitimate," "clinical," and altogether unlike any sonnets ever written), is a psychiatrist.

As a result of general disinterest, the poets of the United States find themselves writing for an audience which grows increasingly smaller. Failing to get the attention of large masses of the population, despairing of their inability to reach the man in the street, the businessman and his equally busy wife, the poets are forced to write for students, for college courses, and all too frequently for each other. Without a public, their allusions become more and more private; their frames of reference are constricted and, with inevitable logic, the response grows still more limited. Instead of great numbers of eager and, therefore, stimulating readers, the poet can count on the attention of only a few special, esoteric, and confusing critics.

The professional critics who are not mere book reviewers are only a handful. It is an almost incredible

fact that, in a country of some one hundred and sixty million men and women, there are no more than a dozen critics of poetry who have anything to say either to the public or to the poet. A provocative book, such as Randall Jarrell's *Poetry and the Age*, published in 1953, is rare. Nevertheless, the babble of criticism is heard above the small voice of creation. To the cultural historian of the next generation, this age may seem not a period of creative effort but an age of muddled criticism. Sometimes the critical attitude is intelligent and useful; but, as Jarrell complained, "a great deal of this criticism might just as well have been written by a syndicate of encyclopedias for an audience of International Business Machines."

Grotesque though the picture may be, it is appropriate to a civilization of precise mechanisms rather than imperfect mortals, of immediate reflexes rather than thoughtful responses, of analysis rather than inspiration. The so-called New Criticism places its emphasis on analyses of structure, examinations of texture, appraisals of double meanings—particularly the different levels of ambiguity—on form rather than content, on style rather than substance. It is significant that most of the New Critics are teachers, professional annotators, devotees of doctorates and theses. As a group, they have developed a manner and even a vocabulary of their own. The vocabulary is as full of technicalities as medical jargon, and the style is as severe as it is surgical. Any piece of writing put upon the table will be skillfully dissected, its most delicate parts exposed, its tissues and tendons separated, its corpuscles counted; but only the toughest poem will recover from the operation. A recent collection quoted seven pages of poetry by T. S. Eliot and followed them with fourteen pages of notes to explain painfully what the reader should have read with pleasure. Far from being the exception, this example is typical of many volumes in which the commentary far exceeds the space taken up by the subject. It is not uncommon to find textbooks in which the original matter is trapped, tossed about, and finally sunk in a sea of exegesis.

Handicapped and hemmed in though they may be, the poets have persisted. Generally speaking, the contemporary poets have gone in two different directions. Most of them have followed, and probably will continue to follow, the course of what might be called "colloquial poetry"—a simple, straightforward, idiomatic, talk-tinctured verse. It is the kind of poetry exemplified by the work and influence of Robert Frost, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Sandburg, and Robinson Jeffers. This is, of course, a rather sweeping generality and, like all generalities, should be taken with reservations. Frost himself is something of a self-contradiction. The Frostian surface is smooth, forthright, easygoing. But the simplicity is deceptive. Underneath the bland surface there are intricate shades; his light raillery, disguised as bucolic fooling, turns into a worldly philosophy; playfulness becomes mixed with profundity. A similar contradiction lies in the nature of Frost's work. At first glance it seems to be the expression of a native optimism, a New England "sweetness and light"; but there is a dark



*Carl Sandburg, a modern, midwestern Whitman*



*Hart Crane's work ranks among the most original of his generation's*



*Robinson Jeffers, who exceeds even Frost in sheer power of language*



*T. S. Eliot has achieved new fame as writer of poetic dramas*



*Marianne Moore, most distinguished of present-day U.S. women poets*



*Randall Jarrell, author of *Poetry and the Age*, is famous younger poet*



*Wallace Stevens' language is rich, florid, rococo*

side, the unhappy awareness of one who is (as he says) "acquainted with the night," with the eternal miseries of mankind which no Utopian panacea can remedy. Frost's reputation was built upon his understanding of isolated men and women, especially as revealed in the dramatic monologues, unforgettably realistic narratives, which first appeared in *North of Boston*, *Mountain Interval*, and *New Hampshire*, books written more than a quarter of a century ago. But his alternately tart and tender lyrics are equally characteristic of the man and the manner. "Fire and Ice," for example, is a nine-line lyric which packs a universal philosophy into an epigram:

Some say the world will end in fire;  
Some say in ice.  
From what I've tasted of desire  
I hold with those who favor fire.  
But if it had to perish twice,  
I think I know enough of hate  
To say that for destruction ice  
Is also great  
And would suffice.

A pioneer in accent and attitude rather than an innovator in form, Robert Frost indicated one direction which many poets were—and are—bound to follow. It is too early to trace his influence, but it has already affected many conservative poets, including John Crowe Ransom (at least Ransom's early work), Mark Van Doren, Robert Hillyer, the late Stephen Vincent Benét, Peter Viereck, and Richard Wilbur, who, at thirty-two, is one of the most talented, tasteful, and ingeniously original of the younger poets.

Robinson Jeffers may have little of Frost's quaint allure but he goes beyond him in sheer power of language. Instead of subtlety and grace there is knotted strength and a kind of black grandeur; instead of hopeful assurance there is uncompromising bitterness. Jeffers populates his California settings with tragic figures straight out of the Greek tragedies—it is no accident that two of his most impressive works are free adaptations, actually completely new reworkings, of Euripides. His "The Women at Point Sur" and the significantly entitled "Give Your Heart to the Hawks" celebrate "the charm of the dark," the distorted passions of men "all matted in one mesh," hurt and hideous. Jeffers despises civilization, distrusts democracy, and, although he has a kind of remote pity for people, dislikes humanity and its poor puppets, "all compelled, all unhappy, all helpless." Jeffers' dramatis personae rend each other against the most melodramatic seacoast in all literature; they give a kind of fierce and terrible magnificence to an unexplored part of the U.S. scene. Although there is little to give comfort, Jeffers counsels man to draw courage, even though he may have to draw it from the pitiless air. It is the nonhuman, the unthinking things that Jeffers loves: the hushed "leopard-footed evening," the streams tearing at the rocks, gulls dancing on crashing waves, hawks that outride the wildest storm, the heartbreaking beauty which remains when there is no heart to break for it—most of all, the joy of poetry, the immortal magic of the written word. He says it eloquently in "To the Stone-Cutters":

Stone-cutters fighting time with marble,  
you foredefeated  
Challengers of oblivion,  
Eat cynical earnings, knowing rock splits,  
records fall down,  
The square-limbed Roman letters  
Scale in the thaws, wear in the rain. The poet as well  
Builds his monument mockingly;  
For man will be blotted out, the blithe earth die,  
the brave sun  
Die blind and blacken to the hearth;  
Yet stones have stood for a thousand years,  
and pained thoughts found  
The honey of peace in old poems.

The other course which contemporary poetry is taking is that which stems from the involved, metaphysical, highly complex, but greatly rewarding styles of the French symbolists and their greatest English exponent, T. S. Eliot. Eliot's early poetry was brilliantly elusive, complicated with erudite references to other literatures, contrasting the classical world of a noble past with the cheap realities of a sordid present. "The Waste Land" and "The Hollow Men" (significant titles) were poems which became the minor epics of a "lost generation." Eliot sounded another note in his later work. Disillusion gave way to affirmation and disbelief was replaced by faith. "Ash-Wednesday" and "Four Quartets" are, in their meditative depths, among the few profound poems of our day—poems passionate and penetrating, which helped to win Eliot the Nobel Prize in 1928 "for his work as a trail-blazing pioneer of modern poetry." In the last few years Eliot has written for the stage and has acquired a kind of fame which could scarcely have been predicted by admirers of his poems. *The Cocktail Party* and *The Confidential Clerk* are intellectual but sprightly comedies, poetic dramas which give a new dimension to the modern theater.

Eliot's stylistic example was followed by others who, not sharing either Eliot's despair or his conversion, had learned from him a new manner, a flexible and effective way of combining the bizarre and the beautiful, achieving a new rhetoric which was both startling and unsurpassable. Hart Crane was thirty-two when, in 1932, after living in Mexico, he turned his back on writing and committed suicide by throwing himself in the Gulf of Mexico. His work takes on importance with each year. Two biographies rank him among the most original poets of his generation and, even though his work presents many difficulties to the average reader, there can be no question about the brilliance of his experiments. The difficulties are caused by the novelty and daring of Crane's diction. His images do not evolve, they erupt; Crane often hypnotized himself into a state of wild intoxication, verbal as well as actual. His syntax was queer; his grammar was whimsical; his symbols were strange and so swift that they collided with each other. When charged that his style was elliptical and illogical, he replied that the "logic of metaphor" preceded "the logician's 'pure' logic" and was far more powerful in its suggestibility than mere "orderly" statements. "The Bridge," Crane's famous long poem (actually a semi-

(Continued on page 26)



# 5

## voices of Spanish America

**CESAR VALLEJO**  
**PABLO NERUDA**  
**RICARDO MOLINARI**  
**OCTAVIO PAZ**  
**JOAQUIN PASOS**

**Pablo Antonio Cuadra**

RUBÉN DARÍO, our literary Bolívar, caused a continent-wide upheaval that opened infinite poetic channels. The number of good poets—poets of stature—that Spanish America has produced in this century, between his day and ours, has no parallel in any other language. Certainly it is unequalled in the history of American culture. (It must be confessed that the second, “vanguard,” period has not achieved the creative power of the earlier “modernist” period, though perhaps the number of poets imparting new experiences, widening the scope of the language, and discovering new poetic territory is larger now than ever. But it is probable that in the future no clear line of demarcation will be drawn between the two periods, and that it is only because we lack the perspective of distance that we separate them now.) To try to analyze this wealth through five poets, as I am about to do, is not only difficult but dangerous, for poetry, like love, arouses violent passions, and such a narrow selection is bound to provoke them. I shall not apologize. I shall simply explain my difficulties and my reasons for choosing these five. If not all my readers are convinced, I hope that at least they will accept the great literary worth and the originality of the poets selected.

Abundance, as I have said, is the first obstacle. By itself it makes my task almost insuperably difficult. I shall never forget my surprise when, as a student in the first stages of literary discovery, I came across an anthology of modern Honduran poetry. This, larger than the thickest dictionary of our language, was only the production of one of our smallest countries! In an article entitled “The Obscurity of the Poet,” Randall Jarrell says that in some American countries everyone from President to porter writes poetry—“and not just any kind,” he adds, “but surrealist poetry.”

There is a second difficulty in choosing the five poets. One notes immediately that with one or two exceptions each is surrounded by another five who are of equal value, or, rather, who complement him, for one charac-

teristic of the new Spanish American poetry is that it has been expressed by “groups,” that the various novelties and discoveries are in general the product not of a single poet but of a “family,” which together builds up a kind of plural lyric personality.

A third problem is trying to balance “representativeness” with quality. For one poet may, considered in isolation, be better than another, yet may have made no really original contribution to poetry as a whole, may instead have perfected and elevated resources already discovered by others.

Naturally, the difficulty lies both in defining the poetic zones and in choosing the most representative poet of each. Poetry cannot be pigeonholed according to the isms by which critics and professors generally make up their routine literary catalogues. In America these names are as far from poetic reality as the meridians on a map are from the living landscapes of the continent. For example, there is no uniquely surrealist movement. Rather, we might say, parodying Darío, “Who is there that is not a surrealist?” The trends and schools are interwoven and blended with many other ingredients, sometimes with obscure residues of tradition and primitive life.

A bird’s-eye view of Spanish American literature enables us to distinguish two long and appreciably different zones—Pacific and Atlantic. In the literature of the Atlantic-zone countries, European and African influences predominate; from this zone come the outstanding examples of “*criollo*” or “*mulato*” writing, and of expressions of the relationship between man and the landscape. In the literature of the Pacific-zone countries, a deeper attraction is felt for the Indian, the native. But in countries like Mexico, Guatemala, and Nicaragua the two poetic zones mingle or there is a struggle to balance them. It is pertinent to add here that Darío, who remade Spanish poetry, could do so not only because of his genius but also because he was a mestizo born at the navel of the continent, where the European influences brought by the trade winds, the African influences thrown up by the Caribbean, and the Indian influences incessantly reanimated by the Pacific strike with equal force.

These two fundamental zones of poetry can be subdivided in turn into regions that have made special contributions. Since I have chosen my poets on as representative a basis as possible, I shall discuss these in speaking of each poet individually. I have tried to vary the picture even more by choosing three who represent the early period—César Vallejo of Peru, Pablo Neruda of Chile, and Ricardo Molinari of Argentina, all born around 1900—and two who represent the second generation—Octavio Paz of Mexico and Joaquín Pasos of Nicaragua.

### César Vallejo

Not enough critical attention has been paid to César Vallejo (1893-1937), nor does he enjoy the extravagant popularity of other, less difficult poets—poetry, like a woman, should offer a certain amount of resistance to



sustain its beauty and its mystery—but unquestionably he is the most American of our contemporary poets. Moreover, he may be taken to represent the whole Pacific-coast poetic zone. Carrying through to completion the Indian-Spanish cultural synthesis begun by his compatriot the Inca Garcilaso, Vallejo extracted from his mestizo nature a new poetic language, whose words and construction express with immediacy and authenticity, almost with magic, the native emotion of the American.

Although Vallejo derives directly from the Darío of the *Nocturnos*, the meaning of the poetic contributions made by the two may be contrasted. If Darío was a great navigator who discovered and conquered the poetic resources for rejuvenating, strengthening, and advancing our literature, if Darío fed on horizons, Vallejo is like a miner who painfully plumbs the secret shadows of the American mystery, uncovering for us its hidden veins, leaving pieces of himself on the way, failing as he succeeds, for his poetry is drawn only from himself and feeds off him. When, in his poem about miners, he refers to the "creators of profundity," he seems to be singing of his personal struggle:

*Los mineros salieron de la mina  
remontando sus ruinas veni-  
[deras, ...  
Calzados de senderos infinitos  
y los ojos de físico llorar,  
creadores de la profundidad  
saben, a cielo intermitente de  
[escalera,  
bajar mirando para arriba,  
saben subir mirando para  
[abajo. ...*

The miners left the mine  
envisioning their future  
[misfortunes, ...  
Shod with endless paths  
and with weeping eyes,  
creators of profundity  
they know, looking inter-  
[mittently at the sky,  
how to go down looking up,  
they know how to go up  
[looking down. ...

In this radically inventive enterprise, which opens the "new" period in our poetry, Vallejo was accompanied by such notable poets as the Chilean Vicente Huidobro and the Mexican Ramón López Velarde. I have chosen the Peruvian poet—although much of his poetry is still in rough form, full of chaff, sometimes babbling like a newborn child—for his American essence and his powerful originality. Huidobro is like a marvelous hothouse gardener whose famous rose ("Why sing of the rose, O poets! Make it blossom in the poem") does not announce its country of origin. With his *creacionismo* he takes a direction entirely contrary to Vallejo's—up into only vaguely American pyrotechnics rather than down into profundities. López Velarde, on the other hand, is a poet whose highly personal language strikes deep roots to give his work all the flavor of his "*suave patria*." But compared with Vallejo and Huidobro, he is a precursor.

Geography, vegetation, the elements preoccupy the Chilean poets. Pablo Neruda, for example, is at his best in invocation of nature

He is too close to Lugones, too dependent on him, though to the methods of the Argentine modernist he adds more surprising and ironic imagery and a more reckless use of adjectives.

Vallejo, moreover, is forever revealing the painful equilibrium of American man. Descendant of a pure Quechua grandmother and a Spanish grandfather, he is the mestizo who feels as an Indian and thinks as a Spaniard, or vice versa. Therein lies his suffering. In this respect there is something beautiful and deeply American in his desperate preoccupation with the permanence of Spain in his inner mestizo world:

*Si cae—digo, es un decir—si cae  
España, de la tierra para abajo,  
niños, ¡cómo váis a cesar de  
[crecer!  
¡cómo va a castigar el año  
[al mes!  
¡cómo van a quedarse en diez los  
[dientes,  
en palote el diptongo, la medalla  
[en llanto!  
¡cómo va el corderillo a  
[continuar  
atado por la pata al gran  
[tintero!  
¡cómo váis a bajar las gradas  
[del alfabeto  
hasta la letra en que nació  
[la pena! ...*

If Spain falls—I say, it is  
[a saying—  
from the earth to below,  
children, how you'll stop grow-  
[ing!  
how the year will punish the  
[month!  
how teeth will be reduced to  
[ten,  
diphthongs to scrawls, medals  
[to sobs!  
how the lamb will go  
tied by the leg to the great  
[inkstand!  
how you'll go down the letters  
[of the alphabet  
to the one where grief was born!

Compare this transcendent hopelessness, which pervades his last and best book, *España, Aparta de Mi Este Cáliz* (Spain, Remove This Cup from Me), with the hopefulness of Darío in his *Cantos de Vida y Esperanza* (Songs of Life and Hope), both drawn from the same human source.

Even when he lived in Paris or sang of Spain, something obscurely telluric and elemental clung to Vallejo's work, as earth clings to roots. He is the great poet of impurities, which are the mark of American poetry. One need only see how he buries himself in the landscape, not describing it but living it and expressing it in communion. One need only hear him sing of love, a love tumultuous and without boundaries:

*Me viene, hay días, una gana  
[ubérrima, política,  
de querer, de besar el cariño  
[en sus dos rostros,  
y me viene de lejos un querer  
demostrativo, otro querer amar,  
[de grado o fuerza,  
al que me odia ...*

There comes to me, some days, a  
[fruitful, polite desire  
to love, to kiss tenderness on  
[its two faces,  
and there comes to me from afar  
[a demonstrative longing,  
another longing to love,  
[willingly or by force,  
the one who hates me. ...



One need only look at death with him—a communal death opposed to that of Rilke, a death filled with a mysterious and radiant trust in the future that is profoundly Indian, and Christian too:

*Al fin de la batalla  
y muerto el combatiente, vino  
hacia él un hombre,  
y le dijo: "No mueras; te amo  
[tanto!]"  
Pero el cadáver ¡ay! siguió  
muriendo.  
Se le acercaron dos y repi-  
tiéronle:  
"¡No nos dejes! ¡Valor!  
¡Vuelve a la vida!"  
Pero el cadáver ¡ay! siguió  
muriendo.  
Acudieron a él, veinte, cien, mil,  
¡quinientos mil,  
clamando: "Tanto amor, y no  
[poder hacer nada contra  
la muerte!]"  
Pero el cadáver ¡ay! siguió  
muriendo, . . .  
Entonces todos los hombres  
de la tierra  
le rodearon: les vio el cadáver  
[triste, emocionado;  
incorporóse lentamente,  
abrazó al primer hombre;  
lechóse a andar.*

One need only hear him to believe in the revelation of American man, for that is what Vallejo was:

*Ínfio después de hombre y  
[antes de él!  
Lo entiendo todo en dos flautas  
y me doy a entender en una  
[quena!*

Indian after being a man and  
[before!  
I hear everything on two flutes  
and I make myself heard on a  
[quena!

Here is the first true poetic alliance of Spanish language and Indian lips.

### Pablo Neruda

Chile is the name not only of a geographical but of a poetic country. Its borders enclose a zone of activity as rich in first-class talents as all North America, and its name may be applied to a chapter of American literary history, just as the terms "romanticism" or "modernism" define movements with distinct characteristics. The lyric population of Chile is large; suffice it to say that an anthology edited by Pablo de Rokha is entitled *Cuarenta y Un Poetas Jóvenes de Chile* (Forty-one Young Chilean Poets, published, of course, by Multitud). But more important than numbers is the richness and originality of Chile's contribution to the poetry of the continent. It was not without a struggle that I selected Pablo Neruda (born 1904) to represent it—because of his very works, in the first place, diminished as they often are by propaganda; because, in the second place, he alone does not sum up the Chilean contribution. Alongside him, often reaching the heights he occupies and developing new dimensions in poetry, are six or seven fine poets whose names must be added to Neruda's if only so that he himself may be properly measured: Angel Cruchaga, Pablo de Rokha, Rosamel del Valle, Juvencio Valle, Humberto Díaz Casanueva, Eduardo Anguita. But he must be chosen because his work is the most

decisive, the most fruitful, and because—though he frequently imitates himself and, even worse, wastes his own resources on a literature of compromise and willful vulgarity—he is without question the most gifted "name-giver" of the new Spanish poetry.

Now that I have used the term, let me say that one of the main characteristics of Chilean poetry is this Adamlike, naming quality of its language. The whole material paradise of the New World—geography, vegetation, the elements—has been named by the Chileans, reconstructed syllable by syllable in its form and in its inherent music. Recall Juvencio Valle's *Establecimiento de la Maravilla* or Neruda's enumerations in *Machu Picchu*—not naked enumerations like those of Whitman, but discovered by the elemental eyes of the mestizo—eyes touching more than seeing, according to José María Valverde—eyes that dive under a mantle of dreams to the mysterious depths of the object. In *Entrada a la Madera* (Entrance Into Wood), he wrote:

*Dulce materia, oh, rosa de  
[alas secas,  
en mi hundimiento tus pétalos  
[subo  
con pies pesados de roja fatiga,  
y en tu catedral dura me  
[arrodillo  
golpeándome los labios con un  
[ángel.*

Sweet matter, O dry-winged  
[rose,  
in my sinking I climb your  
[petals  
with feet heavy with red fatigue,  
and in your hard cathedral  
[I kneel  
striking my lips upon an angel.\*

This quality has led José Coronel Urtecho to comment: "Neruda only repeats asleep what Whitman said awake."

*Yo lloro en medio de lo  
[invadido, entre lo confuso,  
entre el sabor creciente,  
[poniendo el oído  
en la pura circulación. . . .*

I weep in the midst of the  
[invaded, amid the confusion,  
in the growing savor, placing  
[my ear  
in the pure circulation. . . .

It might be thought that this "within-ness," this X-ray power of Neruda's poetry manifests itself in the same way as Vallejo's. But Vallejo explores the human, while Neruda is ignorant of man to the same degree that he loves and knows nature. Even when he asks passionately of the Inca ruins at Machu Picchu, "Stone on stone, where was man?" the reply is rhetorical. Neruda is capable of being moved by the drama of man but never of penetrating or re-creating it. This constitutes the vast difference in tone between Vallejo's and Neruda's books on the Spanish war. In *España, Aparta de Mí Este Cáliz*, Vallejo is a man who suffers and dies; in *España en el Corazón*, Neruda is a sympathetic spectator.

This quality of Neruda's poetry makes me consider entirely unwarranted the term "epic poem of America," which has been applied to his great and most recent work, the *Canto General de Chile*. In dealing with men, with heroes, Neruda never attains the epic. They are like the heroes of cowboy movies: the good is good, all of a piece; the bad is bad, in total shadow. There exists no shading, no human complexity, no living. Homeric structure of a hero—only a flat poster picture. All that is epic about this book is, sometimes, the landscape. What it is is a collection of beautiful lyrics adulterated with wretched didactic passages for polemic use, because of

\* Translations of Pablo Neruda's poems by Angel Flores.

(Continued on page 29)

# Juan Ramón and I



peregrinations in this Hemisphere of a famous Spanish poet and his wife

Zenobia C. de Jiménez

I HESITATED at first when AMERICAS invited me to write about Juan Ramón Jiménez, for I had never before consented to. We're so selfish that we don't want to share the intimate details of our lives with anyone. But since all I was asked for was anecdotes "in a light vein" of our travels in America, this objection was done away with. Almost unconsciously, I began to recall many amusing episodes: I had only to arrange them chronologically.

Ramón Gómez de la Serna, in his somewhat inaccurate but hilarious biography of my husband, described me as a U.S. citizen and a teacher. At the time of the writing neither was true, but, as I told him in Buenos Aires, they were prophetic utterances. Just a few months ago, at this advanced stage in my life and after numerous difficulties, I did become a citizen of this country, and for nine years now I have been teaching at the universities of Maryland and Puerto Rico. I hope the prophet will appreciate the favor I have done him.

My parents' generation believed that male offspring should be fully trained to earn their own living, but that full responsibility for young ladies should be assumed by the family or guardians. However, my mother allowed two exceptions to the rule: a woman could either teach or write, without besmirching her reputation. Obviously, one way or another, I was bound to become a teacher, but it wasn't until I was past fifty and on this side of the "big pond" that I thought seriously about it.

Fate connected me with America in many ways. My mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother were Puerto Ricans, though all mar-

ried immigrants, or outsiders. My father, a Spaniard born in Pamplona, was one of the latter. He came to Puerto Rico as a highway engineer to finish the main road from Coamo to Ponce, where he met and married my mother and their first son was born. My maternal grandfather was a Yankee, and I inherited my looks from him. Undoubtedly because of this deceptive appearance, my friends in Madrid dubbed me "*la americanita*." My father acceded to my mother's wishes that their sons receive their advanced education in the United States, and, as a natural but unforeseen consequence, they all stayed here.

I made four trips to this country with my mother. The first, when I was eight, was to leave my oldest brother at Harvard. Again, eight years later, we came to enroll my second brother at Columbia University and the youngest at Middlesex School in Concord, Massachusetts. That time we stayed four years. Later we came back to visit the first granddaughter (my mother's, of course), and, in the fall of 1915, to see the second. Juan Ramón came over in February 1916, and we were married on March 2 of the same year. Of this brief stay in the States I remember only one amusing episode, an encounter with a sturdy Irish policeman at the door of the City Hall in New York when we went to get our marriage license. He shook his finger and warned: "You'd better look out! It's easier to get in than to get out!" But we've had thirty-seven years with no regrets.

During the next two decades I didn't set foot on American soil, but in the fateful year of 1936 we were compelled to return to this side of the Atlantic. In

twenty years things can change a lot, and almost immediately I began to have trouble. But I wouldn't have admitted to Juan Ramón for anything in the world that I felt so completely lost in surroundings once so familiar. On our first day in New York I changed my bath time rather than confess that I didn't know how to work the ultra-modern U.S. plumbing.

Even though all Juan Ramón knew about the country was what he had seen during his short stay at the time of our marriage, he was more keenly aware than I of the changes that had taken place. He was most shocked by the laxity in heeding rules and regulations that had formerly been obeyed to the letter—the commuter lighting a cigarette right under a “No Smoking” sign, the automobile left in a “No Parking” zone, and so on.

After one week in New York, another on Long Island, and a brief, disheartening trip to Washington—seeking a means to bring peace to Spain, a project in which no one seemed interested—we left for Puerto Rico. Oh, the fabulous stories my mother had told about life there during the last quarter of the nineteenth century! Passing years and nostalgic dreaming had resulted in wonderful legends. All were brought to mind again by the waving green fields of sugar cane, the only reality that formed a link with the past. From the ship's deck I looked at the “little green island” and fell in love with

most charmingly bore me out in my decision. They asked Juan Ramón a thousand and one questions about the donkey of his famous *Platero y Yo* (Platero and I) and were utterly crushed by his death. They did not know what to make of me until the oldest, as if solving a problem, spoke up: “Obviously, since Platero died, he had to marry you.”

Early one morning in the captivating city of Ponce, where Juan Ramón was to lecture at Pro-Arte, I opened the blinds of our room at the pleasant Hotel Meliá, and there on the sidewalk just below our window sat a little boy—chin in hand, not the least bit impatient—looking up at our balcony. I wondered, “What can he be waiting for so quietly?” As if he had heard me, his clear childish voice, somewhat muted by timidity, gave me the answer: “Is that where *he* is?”

After a few weeks in Puerto Rico, we set out for Cuba. The Puerto Rican Department of Culture had asked Juan Ramón to edit and revise an anthology selected by Carmen Gómez de Tejera, a job that had to be done in Cuba since the publishing house was there. Killing two birds with one stone, he also accepted an invitation to speak before the Hispano-Cuban Cultural Society.

We boarded a little French ship that made the rounds of the three Spanish Caribbean islands, and it took us, with a brief stopover in Santo Domingo (what a vivid



*University and literary circles throughout Spanish America, and United States as well, gave warm welcome to refugee Spaniard*

the color of the sea and the toy hills dotting the coastline. I was headed not for the rural serenity of the long-dreamed-about southern plantation, but for the busy atmosphere of a university education department, with some very conscientious, responsible professors.

In my youth the idea of becoming a teacher had never quite jelled, but I had often considered a future as a writer. Since I was single until I was twenty-seven, there was plenty of time for me to find out that my literary whims were no guarantee of serious talent. When I married a man who had discovered his own rich gifts at fourteen, I realized that the best thing I could do with my life was devote it to a talent already in being and waste no more time daydreaming. Shortly after our arrival in Puerto Rico, some lovely little girls

impression of “Hispaniola!”), to Santiago, Cuba. The next day, after being deeply touched by some relics of the Spanish-American War, we took off for Havana in a fast car, crossing the island almost from tip to tip in just a few hours. On entering the capital, we were struck by the enormous contrast between this city and the rest of the country. Havana always brings to mind a memory of luxurious living that became even more glorious at dusk, when a riot of bright clouds was thrust up out of the sea on the northern horizon. But this was breathtaking, not amusing, and I'm off the track of entertaining anecdotes.

We had not been in Havana long, and still hadn't had time to organize our budget, which had been thrown out of kilter by our rather topsy-turvy existence, when one



evening we paid a visit to our extraordinary and unforgettable friend María Muñoz de Quevedo. This valiant Spanish lady, though uprooted from her native land, had organized and was directing the Havana chorus. Juan Ramón got out of the taxi and put his hand in his pocket for the fare, but the thoughtful cabbie, sensing that we were in a hurry, stopped him with a gesture, saying: "If you're *apurado*, sir, just let it go for now." Juan Ramón must have forgotten the word *apurado*,



*At the University of Puerto Rico, Rector Jaime Benítez introduced Juan Ramón to lecture audience*

which in Spain usually signifies "in financial straits," may also mean "rushed"—a usage very common in Latin America. He paused on the stairs, thoroughly perplexed: "Now how in the world could he possibly have known that?"

While musing about our stay in Havana, I must mention the wonderful friendships that have endured the ravages of time, distance, and—worse yet—silence. During those two long years in Cuba our spiritual and moral suffering was too overpowering for me to be able to recall many "light" moments, but there was one more. The Loynaz family, always so hospitable to visitors on the island, had lent us a superb radio, which, in addition to bringing us the last-minute news, gave me the opportunity to hear and familiarize myself with the variations in accent and pronunciation of the different Spanish American countries. On one occasion I heard a frantic voice, obviously Cuban, shouting: "This low-down, good-for-nothing, thieving so-and-so. . . ." I thought he must be alerting the audience about some recently escaped desperado. During the reign of Alfonso XIII, which covered most of my life in Spain, there was enough freedom of speech so that no one had to bite his tongue, but, even so, I was thoroughly flabbergasted when I realized that this was only passing mention of the mayor.

In January 1939, when Juan Ramón had finished his work in Cuba, we wanted to return to the United States before the war's end might invalidate our passports. My three brothers had been living there for years, and the eldest was like a father to me. We soon discovered that the New York climate was very hard on Juan Ramón, so we moved to Miami, where the pines reminded him

of Moguer, his birthplace and childhood home, and his nostalgia was assuaged by looking at them.

In these new surroundings, where we felt lost and alone, we were comforted by the knowledge that our friends' affection was with us. First we lived on Alhambra Avenue and afterward in our own little home on Sevilla Street in the university community of Coral Gables. In Miami we encountered a minor difficulty that was rather amusing. Quite often when we sat down on the bench to wait for a bus, the passersby, both white and colored, would cast scornful or resentful glances in our direction. It was several months before we discovered that some of these seats were marked "White" and others "Colored," and obviously we had been out of place most of the time. Then one day we really had our eyes opened. Juan Ramón has a decided preference for the last row—in theaters, streetcars, and so on—and on this particular occasion had just settled himself comfortably in the very back of the bus when a dignified Negro matron took him by the shoulder and invited him to go and sit up front where the white people belonged.

World War II put an end to our pleasant interlude in Coral Gables. In Washington life became more intense, more interesting, but also more difficult. My favorite brother had died, so New York no longer held any fascination as a vacation spot. At the end of the war, we had to leave our apartment in the city and find a small house in the suburbs near the University of Maryland. I had been on the faculty since 1944, and now we were both teaching there. With different class schedules, we were spending too much time on the road, especially in winter storms. I for one never have liked it when the wheels of a car take off like ice-skates.

My teaching career began casually. I gave a lecture before a group of enlisted men at the university, and the department head observed that I was a "born teacher." To this I owe all my university activities. I stayed on to give two concentrated courses for the soldiers. When they were finished, I wrote a courtesy note to my mentor, thanking him for the opportunity he had given me, offering my services if I could ever be useful to him in the future, and so on. To my amazement, he phoned at once to demand: "Do you really mean what you say?" And I remained on the Maryland faculty, teaching Spanish civilization, until 1951, when we came to Puerto Rico because of my husband's health.

Our first Christmas in semi-isolation might have been sad, but thanks to our radio it was indescribably wonderful. In the enormous Washington apartment building where we had been living, the short wave hadn't worked at all. Out there in the quiet country, Radio España unexpectedly came forth with Ramón Menéndez Pidal's program of old romances. We wrote to Spain, telling everyone how happy we were, and on Christmas Eve (Juan Ramón's birthday), secluded from the outside world, we listened to the first program dedicated "to the absent poet." Tears of mixed joy and sadness ran down our cheeks. Another quiet Christmas night in Riverdale a very thoughtful Puerto Rican lady brought a group of

*(Continued on page 45)*

# translating the

## Can poetry stand the change?

Muna Lee

WHEN VICTOR HUGO WAS ASKED if it is not very difficult to write a poem, he is said to have replied, "It is either very easy or impossible!" That answer is perfectly applicable to a translation of poetry—a successful translation. No one has expressed this more exactly than one of the most felicitous of translators, Helen Waddell, who has rendered into English poetry the Latin lyrics of medieval poets and wandering scholars in two volumes in which

Joyously return again  
Singing-birds in chorus.

In explaining the basis for selecting the poems translated, Miss Waddell acknowledges that "the omissions here may well seem unaccountable. There are five lyrics from Fortunatus, but not the two that are his immortality; Hrabanus Maurus is here, but not his pupil and far greater poet, the ill-starred Gottschalk. . . . I tried to translate them, and could not. . . . A man cannot say, 'I will translate,' any more than he can say, 'I will compose poetry.' In this minor art also, the wind blows where it lists." But, Helen Waddell adds proudly, "In one thing the translator is happy: he walks with good companions." Companions, it should be added, of his own choosing. The translation of poetry offers no material advantage—no inducement, indeed, beyond the pleasure of the task. No sane person would expect to make a living wage by writing poetry, although he might cherish hopes of that remote eventuality, fame. But the translator of poetry, likewise without expectation of money, has even less of fame. On the contrary, the better, the more successful, he is as a translator, the less perceptible his own part in the finished work: it is the author who speaks, who is heard and acknowledged; and that is as it should be. The translator is an agent,

a medium, a passive vessel; his triumph is to achieve a translation so little his own possession that nothing, not even consciousness of the translator's presence, comes between the author and his new audience in another language.

Parturition, however easy and natural, may be expected to be painful. Victor Hugo was not denying the birth pangs of poetry when scoffing at the supposed difficulties. In that, the writing of poetry is almost wholly different from translation—which, indeed, is not so much parturition as adoption. The tension of making a poem is very unlike the relaxation of translating a poem already created by someone else. In both, there may be high excitement; but in the one, the excitement is that of striving to lift to the utmost of one's reach; in the other, it is the excitement of enticing beauty to another habitat nearer home.

It is not strange, then, that in spite of the lack of conspicuous rewards almost every creative writer (as well as hordes with no creative gifts) is constantly trying his hand at translation. Cicero and Quintilian long ago recommended the practice as beneficial literary exercise. Voltaire—than whom no one could have been temperamentally less fitted for the task—tried translating Shakespeare, with lamentable results. The genius of each was too great, and too unlike the other's, for success to have been possible. Lesser talents have been applied far more profitably to lesser works. In fact, the failures in translation are hardly less spectacular than the triumphs. And of all forms of literary endeavor, the translation of poetry has, perhaps, been responsible for most time misspent and labor wasted. (That clomp-clomp that offends your ears is all too often the heavy unangelic footfall of translators fearless where they tread.)

Yet "*Traduttori, traditori*" is not always an adequate summing-up of the translator's zeal, even when his work falls far short of perfection. The controlled ecstasy of Keats' sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" would be an enduring monument to the new planet and his own wild surmise even if there were no "Ode to a Grecian Urn" to attest it further.

In a recent after-dinner conversation with other delegates to a UNESCO conference, the Consul General of Iran remarked that often a translation was so far superior to the original as to bestow on the latter a literary fame it would hardly have won by itself. He mentioned as an example Edward FitzGerald's adoption, adaptation, and appropriation of Omar Khayyam's *Rubaiyat*, and added that Persian literature presents a curiously satisfactory analogy in reverse translation. It seems that an early nineteenth-century Persian writer translated an English Gothic novel, not one of the well-known examples of its school; in fact, of those taking part in the conversation, all of whom had at least an average acquaintance with English literature, none had ever heard of the original work or its author. The novel nevertheless was so beautifully translated that it became a gem of Persian literature, as familiar and beloved in Iran now as the *Rubaiyat* is in English-speaking lands. Often, the Consul General concluded, an Iranian on his first visit to London, eager to pay tribute at a literary shrine, will inquire about the house in which that classic was written, only to be met with blank looks and discover that both novel and writer are utterly forgotten in the land of their origin.

Is it possible to be really faithful to the original text in both form and spirit? Or must the translator forgo the one for the sake of the other, his immediate problem always being which to choose, rendition of the language or rendition of the meaning? These are questions that every conscientious translator must sometimes ponder, though they are rarely presented as such a choice between extremes as the inexperienced might suppose. Readers not

themselves translators often express wonder that a poem can be carried over from one language to another with the poetic pattern intact, rhyme scheme and all. It is sometimes viewed as a remarkable achievement that a Spanish sonnet should be transformed into a sonnet in English, with its fourteen lines no more, no less, its octet still rising, its sestet still retreating, as free and as orderly as a wave; or that Spanish *décimas* should become ten-lined English stanzas, rhymes marching properly in place. The fact is that if a translator can translate the poem at all, and if he knows his poetic technique and loves the craft as well as the art of verse, he often finds that a fixed pattern facilitates his task. It is not necessarily more difficult to put a sonnet thought into English lines than into Spanish. Rather, it often helps to have the sonnet already mapped, so to speak. It helps, that is, if the thing can be done at all; for sometimes, despite the best of will and skill, it cannot.



Tallian in Revista Nacional de Cultura



Drawing by Tallian in Revista Nacional de Cultura, Caracas

Writing more than a century and a half ago, Alexander Fraser Tytler listed in his *Principles of Translation* three general laws: that the translation give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work; that the style and manner of writing in a translation be "of the same character with that of the original"; and that a translation have "all the ease of original composition." Ease, however, Tytler warned, must never "degenerate into licentiousness . . . the ease of Billingsgate and Wapping."

What makes for easy translation? Take two examples, both easy to translate: Poe and Whitman. Edgar Allan Poe is clearly one of the most "translatable" poets in literature. Yet he is also one of the most patterned, one whose melody is not only part of the poem; sometimes it *is* the poem, which, lacking the music, would cease to exist. A poem by Poe put into prose is hardly a poem and is decidedly not Poe; but how easily, how melodiously, the rolling numbers sweep sonorous into French or Spanish or German, sound and sense indissoluble. And how completely the translations remain recognizably, unmistakably Poe.

Whitman, on the other hand, translates easily because the pattern counts for comparatively little. The idea is the thing, and it seems to make its own rhythms as it flows outward and onward in whatever language. Whitman's poetry is not molded by, but itself shapes, any vessel into which it is poured.

The poet difficult, next to impossible, to translate—Juan Ramón Jiménez, for example—is the one who has not only his own style and his own message, but an idiom so personal that words may mean one thing to him and something quite different to the rest of the world, or may have connotations so peculiarly his that no approximation in other speech can render the hovering thought. Translation can cast no light on poetry that is darkened, not illuminated, by its own images. (Yet even such poetry has its translators, and sometimes the translations do achieve a miracle. In the case of Helen Waddell, it is a recurrent miracle.)

Quite apart from translations which are not properly such because of failure to give the spirit, the meaning, and the approximate form of the original, it is surprising to find how wide the divergence may be between two good renditions by different hands of the same original. No matter how well a poet-translator knows both languages, no matter how thoroughly he is imbued with the spirit of the original nor how faithful to it, what he sets down in translation will be as different from the version of another poet-translator equally endowed as (to be brutally frank) both are from the original. English literature, which abounds in good translations, proves time and time again that the translator's personality will inevitably, and despite his best intention, give color and inclination to his work.

Respective renditions by Austin Dobson and George Santayana of Théophile Gautier's "*L'Art Victrix*" strikingly illustrate the translator's coloration. Both versions are memorable achievements, as translation and as English poetry; but how different they are, within the larger fidelity to essential image and general pattern. Take two of the finest stanzas as examples. Gautier wrote:

*Point de contraintes fausses!  
Mais que pour marcher droit  
Tu chausses,  
Muse, un cothurne étroit*

Dobson gives:

O Poet, then forbear  
The loosely-sandalled verse,  
Choose rather then to wear  
The buskin—strait and terse.

This, in Santayana's hands becomes:

No idle chains endure;  
Yet, Muse, to walk aright,  
Lace tight  
Thy buskin proud and sure.

Again, the original reads:

*Tout passe. L'art robuste  
Seul a l'éternité.  
Le buste  
Survit à la cité.*

Dobson has:

All passes, Art alone  
Enduring stays to us;  
The bust outlasts the throne,  
The coin, Tiberius.

Santayana renders it:

All things return to dust  
Save beauties fashioned well.  
The bust  
Outlasts the citadel.

A look into a translator's workshop may help us understand something of his problems and his method. Walter Owen, of Buenos Aires, whose long, devoted service to translation was fittingly recognized last March 29 by the unveiling of his bust at the Glasgow school he attended, affords us an opportunity. In the preface to his version of Book I of *La Araucana* (1945), Mr. Owen offers as an example his own progressive rendering of the opening stanza. Ercilla wrote:

*No las damas, amor, no gentilezas,  
De caballeros canto enamorados,  
Ni las muestras, regalos y ternezas  
De amorosos afectos y cuidados;  
Mas el valor, los hechos, las proezas  
De aquellos españoles esforzados,  
Que a la cerviz de Arauco no domada,  
Pusieron duro jugo por la espada.*



Virgilio Trómpiz in *Revista Nacional de Cultura*

His first, and approximately literal draft translation, he says, was:

Not ladies, love, nor courtesies  
Of amorous knights I sing,  
Nor tokens, sweets, and favours  
Of love's delights and cares.  
But the valour, deeds, and exploits  
Of those stalwart Spaniards,  
That on Arauco's untamed neck  
Placed by the sword a rigorous yoke.

The sense is there, Mr. Owen points out; the matter. The expression is not inadequate. "But the rhythm and ring and martial tramp of Ercilla are absent. The epic note is wanting; the bird of poetry has escaped our net of English words." And then he shows us a translator at work.

Since Ercilla followed traditional models, notably Homer and Virgil, Mr. Owen decides on a classic invocation ("Sing, Muse!"), but is faced with the necessity of adhering to Ercilla's list of what the Muse is not to



sing. Several of the prohibited items can be loosely grouped as "Venus," especially if she be accompanied by Cupid—at which Mr. Owen has a happy inspiration and calls the latter not Cupid but "her chuck":

Sing, Muse! but not of Venus and her chuck



Tallián in Revista Nacional de Cultura

A similar process transmutes Ercilla's *caballeros enamorados* into:

Nor amorous jousts in dainty lists of love;  
and since gallant cavaliers naturally lay siege to Beauty,  
Ercilla's

*muestras, regalos y ternezas*  
*De amorosos afectos y cuidados*

becomes:

Favours and forfeits won in Beauty's siege,  
By soft assaults of chamber-gallantry  
which ends the negations and brings the translator to  
encharge the Muse affirmatively.

But of the valiant deeds and stratagems

Mr. Owen confesses, was his first revision but quickly  
straightened out into:

But of the valiant deeds and worthy fame.

In the next line, "*españoles*" is a key word, but "Spaniards" in English is a trochee, and difficult. Reluctantly the translator decides to omit "Spaniards" here and "bring in the national note" later on; so the line becomes:

Of those who far on surge-ensundered shores  
with the phrase giving a sense of the sixteenth-century remoteness of "those" who fought in Arauco. The next line came "easy and unforced" as

Placed by the sword the rigorous yoke of Spain

which—on second thought—Mr. Owen wryly decided was "a riggish jig of letters," not to mention the ambiguity of "placed by the sword." He then hit on "to Spain's stern yoke"; but was still faced by the necessity of getting the sword in again, and of employing six English syllables for the purpose. He meditates: "A set-phrase suggests itself here: 'the arbitrament of the sword'; slightly worn by use, but one that can serve our turn by a slight change. 'By war's arbitrament'—now we have our six syllables: a good ending for the stanza, with the last three syllables cracking like a whip-lash that flickers on that grim yoke in the fore-part of the line."

Thus Walter Owen arrived by pleasant stages at his final version:

Sing, Muse; but not of Venus and her chuck,  
And amorous jousts in dainty lists of love,  
Favours and forfeits won in Beauty's siege  
By soft assaults of chamber gallantry;  
But of the valiant deeds and worthy fame  
Of those who far on surge-ensundered shores,  
Bent the proud neck of Araucania's race  
To Spain's stern yoke, by war's arbitrament.

Criticism and advice, both abundantly good and abundantly bad, are never lacking to the translator. "What work nobler than transplanting foreign thought?" asked Carlyle. It is true that the advice is frequently contradictory (and, for that matter, the criticism too). For the one school, Francklin advises with respect to an author:

Soften each blemish, and each grace improve,  
And treat him with the dignity of love

while Roscommon counsels sternly:

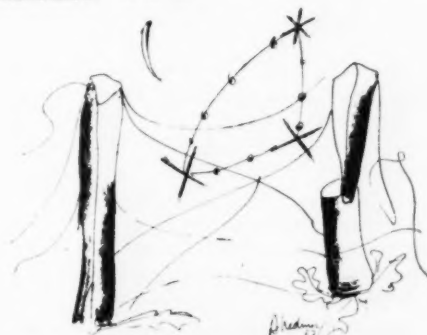
Your author always will the best advise;  
Fall when he falls, and when he rises, rise

which Andrew Marvell makes even more explicit:

He is translation's thief that addeth more,  
As much as he that taketh from the store  
Of the first author. Here he maketh blots  
That mends; and added beauties are but spots.

Perhaps the translator's proud humility has never been more adequately stated than by Fray Luis de León, when he said: "Regarding what I compose, each will judge as he wish; regarding what is translated, let him who would be judge first find out what it is to translate elegant poems from a foreign language into one's own without adding nor taking away idea; preserving wherever possible the imagery of the original, and its grace; and making the poems speak Spanish not like upstarts and foreigners but like those born and native to it. I do not say that I have done this; I am not so arrogant; but that I have tried to do so I confess. And let him who says that I have not succeeded attempt it himself, and then it may be that he will esteem my work more highly, to which I bent myself only to show that our tongue receives well all that is entrusted to it and is neither hard nor scanty, as some say, but waxen and abundant for those who know how to deal with it."

As for criticism, the most welcome that any translator could receive is such an accolade as Dr. Alberto Lleras Camargo once bestowed with characteristic generosity. "For me, this is not only a sample of how I would like to write English, but an example of how I would desire to be translated." ♦ ♦ ♦



A. Medina in Cuadernos Hispano Americanos, Madrid

## Manuel Bandeira

IRONY, the willingness to laugh or at least smile at things or situations too painful or revolting if treated seriously—what Jean Paul Richter called “laughing tears in the eyes”—found a place in Brazilian poetry with the so-called “generation of ’22.” This was the group that rebelled against the values and standards then in vogue and took its name from the year of Brazil’s first, and historic, Modern Art Week. Before that there were only rare instances of real irony in one poet or another—Álvaro Moreyra, Ronald de Carvalho, or Ribeiro Couto, for example—and these were all in poets of the era immediately preceding 1922 who were later absorbed by that movement.

*Humoristicamente* was the adverb that Álvaro Moreyra, the most congenitally ironic of all our poets, chose to modify the verb *sorrir* (to smile) in the sonnet *Para a Noite* (To Night):

sardonic

*Depois o mundo . . . o amor . . . filosofias . . .  
Senti na treva a dor que tu sofrias,  
Dor de abandono, pobre dor silente.*

*Junto de ti fiquei. Fiquei sorrindo  
Para o céu, noite triste, o céu tão lindo,  
Humoristicamente, docemente . . .*

*Later the world . . . love . . . philosophies . . .  
In the darkness I felt the pain you suffered,  
Pain of rejection, poor silent pain.*

*I remained beside you, I remained, smiling  
At the sky, the wistful night, the lovely sky,  
Humorously, sweetly.*

His second book, *Lenda das Rosas* (The Legend of the Roses, 1916) contains more than one poem in a decidedly humorous vein. For example, speaking of an old sorrow, “an elegant, decorative pain” created “especially for me to suffer,” he says:

*Durou cinco anos. Durante bastante:  
Uma alegria não dura assim . . .*

*It lasted five years, and that was long enough:  
A joy does not last so long.*

And *Epitáfio* sums up a whole lifetime in two lines:

*Acreditei na vida. E a vida em mim. Depois  
Desandamos a rir de nós mesmos os dois . . .*

*I had believed in life. Life, in me. Then  
The two of us burst out laughing at ourselves.*

Ronald de Carvalho, in one of his *Epigramas Irônicos e Sentimentais*, gives this very Omaresque advice: “Fill your cup, drink your wine, before the cup falls from your hands.” But he adds (and here he is completely himself):

*Há saltadores amáveis pelo teu caminho,  
Repara como é doce o teu vizinho,  
Repara como é suave o olhar do teu vizinho,  
E como são longas, discretas, as suas mãos . . .*

*There are kindly attackers in your path,  
Note how sweet your neighbor is,  
Note how gentle is the look in his eye,*

*And how long and discreet his hands.*

Ribeiro Couto’s book *O Jardim das Confidências* (The Garden of Confessions, 1921) maintains a sentimental tone throughout, but there is a subtly ironic touch of humor when the poet sees the “frivolous Columbine” go by and asks, wet-eyed: “Could Momus be the king of love?”

I struck a similar note in one of my own poems of 1919, *Rondô de Colombina* (Columbine’s Rondeau), from the collection *Carnaval*. Addressing Pierrot, the voice of the poet asked:

*Que são teus amores? . . . Ingenuidade  
E o gosto de buscar a própria dor.  
Ela é de dois? . . . Pois aceita a metade!  
Que essa metade é talvez todo o amor  
De Colombina . . .*

*What are your loves? . . . Ingenuousness  
And the pleasure of seeking your own pain.  
Her love must be shared? . . . Then take your half!  
For that half is perhaps all the love  
Of Columbine.*

Nevertheless, it was only with the advent of the modernist movement that ironic humor burst unmistakably onto our poetic scene (modernism, incidentally, had quite a different connotation in Brazilian literature than in Spanish-language writing, for in our case it effected a revolution against belated parnassianism and symbolism). The principal leaders of that generation, Mário de Andrade and Oswald de Andrade, continually injected flashes of irony into their work.

Mário de Andrade (1893-1945) explained that his second book, *Paulicéia Desvairada* (São Paulo Gone Mad, 1921) was the product of twenty months of doubt and anger. The most important poem in the volume, from

the standpoint of content as well as of length, is *As Enfihraturas do Ipiranga* (*enfihraturas* is a word Andrade coined from *fibra*—"fiber"—to mean something like "interweavings": Ipiranga is a local river, the scene of the proclamation of Brazilian independence). Biting irony runs freely through the dialogue between the four choruses representing the literary nationalists and the traditional poets of the old school, the millionaires and the proletariat, with occasional recitatives by *Minha Loucura* (My Madness), the only solo part. Only *Minha Loucura* expresses the poet's indignation and rebellion without irony, and it has the last word.

Another poem of deep dissatisfaction by the same author is his *Danças*. Nevertheless, the first "Dance" starts with this line: "Who'll say I'm not happy? I dance!" He dances with his shoulders, the dance of indifference (yet never was there anyone less indifferent than Mário de Andrade):

"Oh, como passas!" "Oh, how you pass by!"  
 "Bravo! enfim voltas!" "Bravo! At last you return!"

São inimigos, They are enemies,  
 São morfímanos, They are morphinists,  
 Crápulas vis, Vile, debauched.  
 Saúdo a todos, I salute them all,  
 Ninguém me estima, Nobody likes me,  
 Dançam meus ombros, My shoulders dance,  
 Eu sou feliz! I am happy!

In Dance No. 4, the girl dances because she coughs:

Teu corpo todo se enrodilha	Your whole body doubles up,
estremece	shudders,
sacode	shakes
bate	thrashes
late	pulsates
sêco	dry
... heque! heque! ...	... hack! hack! ...
quebra	breaks
queima	burns
reina	prevails
dança	dances
sangue	blood
gosma ...	phlegm ...
Filha, tu danças para dormir!	Daughter, you dance in order
Tosses até que não podes	[to sleep]
!mais!	You cough until you can't
Devo esconder-te o meu	[cough any more!
!sorriso?	Must I hide my smile from
	[you?

In the end the poet, as if tired of putting up a false front, confesses that he dances "because he no longer knows how to cry!"

Now, Oswald de Andrade was 100 per cent desensitized in his permanent, or almost permanent, style of persiflage. Everyone in Brazil knows that he was the one who lit the flame of the 1922 movement. He it was who, in an article published in the *Jornal do Comércio* of São Paulo in 1920, made public some of the poems from Mário de Andrade's *Paulicéia Desvairada*. His true medium of expression is prose, whether in fiction or in journalism. But that did not prevent him from making some ravaging excursions into the field of poetry, with a lack of technical proficiency that he turned into one of the most captivating elements in his verse. In this connection, the title of his second collection of poems hit the mark: *Primeiro Caderno do Aluno de Poesia*

*Oswald de Andrade* (First Notebook of the Poetry Student Oswald de Andrade). He controls his tenderness—whether of the amorous variety or in speaking of the pleasure of returning to his native land—to such an extent that he seems to take nothing seriously, which is not the case. Here is how he addresses the beloved woman he eventually married:

Toma conta do céu	Take care of the sky
Toma conta da terra	Take care of the land
Toma conta do mar	Take care of the sea
Toma conta de mim	Take care of me
Maria Antonieta d'Alkmin.	Maria Antonieta d'Alkmin.

Catching sight of the Southern Cross when returning to Brazil from Europe, he wrote:

*Primeiro farol de minha terra*  
 Tão alto que parece construído no céu  
 Cruz imperfeita  
 Que marcas o calor das florestas  
 E os discursos de 22 câmaras de deputados  
 Silêncio sobre o mar do Equador  
 Perto de Alpha e de Beta  
 Perdão dos analfabetos que contam casos  
 Acaso.  
 First lighthouse of my land  
 So high that you seem constructed in the sky  
 Imperfect cross  
 That marks the heat of the forests  
 And the speeches of twenty-two chambers of deputies  
 Silence over the equatorial sea  
 Near to Alpha and to Beta  
 Forgiveness for the illiterates who tell stories  
 Perchance.

And in eleven lines he traced the evolution of Brazil from the arrival of the first Portuguese caravel down to the mess that is Carnival (Zé, for José, Pereira is a traditional figure in the Carnival celebration, and here represents the Portuguese element in the common people):

*O Zé Pereira chegou de caravela*  
 E perguntou pro guarani da mata-virgem  
 —Sois cristão?  
 —Não, Sou bravo, sou forte, sou filho da Morte  
 Teterê tetê Quizá Quizá Quecê!  
 Lá longe a onça resmungava Uu! ua! uu!  
 O negro zonzó saído da fôrnlha  
 Tomou a palavra e respondeu  
 —Sim pela graça de Deus  
 Canhem Babá Canhem Babá Cum Cum!  
 E fizeram o Carnaval.

Zé Pereira arrived by caravel  
 And asked the Guarani in the virgin forest  
 "Are you a Christian?"  
 "No, I am brave, I am strong, I am Death's son  
 Teterê tetê Quizá Quizá Quecê!"  
 There in the distance the jaguar grumbled  
 ["Uu! Ua! Uu!"  
 The dazed Negro coming out of the furnace  
 Took the floor and replied  
 "Yes, by the grace of God,  
 Canhem Babá Canhem Babá Cum Cum!"  
 And they created Carnival.

Although I myself was a few years older than the members of the Generation of 1922, that movement had a noticeable influence on my work. My ironic nature, suppressed by classical training—parnassian and symbolist—expanded freely beginning with my book *Libertinagem* (Libertinism) in 1930. One of my most

characteristic poems, from the standpoint of irony, was *Pneumo-torax*. In it, a doctor examines a tuberculosis patient and pronounces: "You have a cavity in the left lung and the right lung is affected." Terrified at the diagnosis, the invalid asks fearfully: "Then, doctor, can't we try a pneumothorax?" To which the physician replies ominously: "No. The only thing to do is play an Argentine tango."

Murilo Mendes is perhaps the most complex, the most original poet of his generation. Before he became famous for his poetry with a religious background he was already well known for his taunting poems, which have a typical Rio de Janeiro flavor although the poet comes from Minas Gerais. Like Oswald de Andrade, he never misses anything ridiculous in our national life, past or present. "In his work," Mário de Andrade wrote, "there is a more constant Brazilianism than in that of any other Brazilian poet." Murilo Mendes' book *Poemas* (1930) opens with a parody of Gonçalves Dias' *Canção do Exílio*. The romantic poet had written: "My land has palm trees, where the *sabiá* sings" and "Our sky has more stars, our meadows have more flowers." Murilo Mendes quips: "My land has apple trees from California, where Venetian tanagers sing" and "Our flowers are prettier, our fruits are tastier, but they cost a hundred milreis a dozen." The republican revolution of November 15, 1889, is summarily related in these lines (Deodoro is Manuel Deodoro da Fonseca, who proclaimed the republic):

*Deodoro todo nos trinques  
Bate na porta de Dão Pedro Segundo.  
"Seu imperador, dê o fora,  
Que nós queremos tomar conta desta bugiganga.  
Mande vir os músicos."  
O imperador bocejando responde:  
"Pois não, meus filhos. Não se vexem.  
Me deixem calçar as chinelas.  
Podem entrar à vontade.  
Só peço que não me bulam nas obras completas de  
[Victor Hugo]."*

Deodoro in all his finery  
Knocks on the door of Dom Pedro II.  
"Your majesty, get out of here,  
We want to take charge of this junk.  
Send for the musicians."  
The Emperor, yawning, replies:  
"All right, my sons. Don't get upset.  
Let me put on my slippers.  
You can come in when you like.  
Only please don't disturb my complete works of  
[Victor Hugo]."

In *Mundo Enigma* there is this poem:

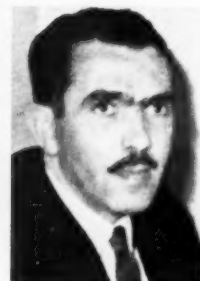
<i>Ele acredita que o chão é duro</i>	He believes that the ground is
<i>Que todos os homens estão</i>	[hard
<i>[presos</i>	That all men are prisoners
<i>Que há limites para a poesia</i>	That poetry has its limits
<i>Que não há sorrisos nas crianças</i>	That there are no smiles in
<i>Nem amor nas mulheres</i>	[children
<i>Que só de pão vive o homem</i>	Nor any love in women
<i>Que não há um outro mundo.</i>	That man lives by bread alone
	That there is no other world.

This poem is surprisingly entitled *O Utopista* (The Utopian).

Augusto Meyer, who hails from Rio Grande do Sul, is



Manuel Bandeira



Rubem Braga



Alvaro Moreyra



Augusto Meyer



Murilo Mendes



Mário de Andrade



Oswald de Andrade

the author of three books of poems: *Coração Verde* (Green Heart), *Giraluz* (Whirl of Light), and *Poemas de Bilu*. In the first two, he expresses himself calmly, ingenuously, while in the third Meyer becomes Bilu, "the philosopher Bilu, a metaphysical juggler, a great parabolic deceiver," reducing everything to himself, dissolving thoughts and emotions into "monkey faces." His poem *Chewing Gum* is a good representation of his definitive attitude toward life and his ironic and bored style:

*Masco e remasco a minha raiva, chewing gum.  
Que pílula éste mundo!  
Roda roda sem parar.  
Zero zero zero zero,  
É uma falta de imprevisto . . .*

*Cotidianissimamente enfastiado,  
Engulo a pílula ridícula,  
Janto universo e como mosca. . .*

*Bilu, pensa nas madrugadas que virão.  
Aspira a força da terra, possante e contente.  
Cada pedra no caminho é trampolim.  
O futuro se conjuga saltando.*

*Depois:  
Indicativo presente—  
Caio em mim.*



I chew and rechew my anger, chewing gum.  
What a pill this world is!  
It turns and turns without stopping.  
Zero zero zero zero,  
Such a lack of improvisation.

Disgusted with this daily routine,  
I swallow the ridiculous pill,  
I dine on universe and eat flies. . . .

Bilu, think of the day-breaks to come.  
Breathe in the strength of the land, powerful and happy.  
Each stone in the path is a springboard.  
The future is conjugated by leaping.

Then afterward:  
Present indicative—  
I awake as myself.



Pedro Nava



Vinicius de Moraes



Carlos Drummond  
de Andrade

The philosopher Bilu knows that roads were made for walking, he hears the world command him to "Enter the circle" but refuses the invitation, and the bitter taste in his mouth is relieved only "in the great light of renunciation." The final residue of this nihilistic philosophy is that "we are the shadow of a dream within a shadow," or the inverse of Pindar's concept, which defined man as "a shadow's dream." Here is the definition of love the poet gives in *Grinfa* (Sweetheart):

Como a gente se completa . . .  
O corpo-duplo tem alma.

Um mais um igual a Um.

Mas não faleis no AMOR.

Repara:

É uma palavra desgraçada.

É uma palavra que separa.

As people complete each other,  
The double body has a soul.

One plus one equals One.

But don't speak of LOVE.

Observe:

It is an unlucky word.

It is a word that separates.

In a love letter Meyer asks the beloved, "Give me your body, give me your body!" But he adds this postscript: "I don't want your soul: I have one too many." He makes a delightful jest in his poem *Rimance*, which is not a ballad at all but a love song in an imitation of archaic Portuguese that only one who is familiar with the real thing could compose (the humor lies precisely in the burlesque treatment of the language):

Senhora minha, quo vadis?  
Que me enchedes de saudades.

A esta façon me faredes

Deperecer por my fê

De vossas blandas beldades.

Lady myne, quo vadis?

For thou fillest me with sadnesses

In this fashion thou makest me

Perish, by myne faith,

With thyne blandes charmes.

A esta façon me deixades?

Senhora minha, haveredes

De avelenar coração

Y ay! quão enfermo deixades

A quem tão mal atendedes!

Deixarades de mardades.

Wilt leave me in this fashion?

Lady myne, thou must

Have poisoned myne heart

And ay! how sick thou leavest

The one thou treatest so ill!

Cease with thyne badnesse.

In our poetry, the most typical representative of the men of Minas Gerais is Carlos Drummond de Andrade. The real Minas people are endowed with the qualities of careful reflection, mistrust of hasty enthusiasm, a taste for double meanings, and pessimistic reserve, all elements that generate irony. Every time this *mineiro* temperament coincides with a fine sensitivity or the gift for poetry, an ironist with real style results. Carlos Drummond de Andrade is the most notable example of this happy combination. With moved and moving feeling in every line he writes, the poet almost never abandons the ironic attitude, even in the tenderest moments. In his poetry, tenderness and irony generally play an automatic game of see-saw; there is never a false motion in this marvelous lyric apparatus. The poet does not expect much of mankind: "Except for two or three, they are all going to hell." Like the Jesus in the poem *Romaria* (Pilgrimage), he must dream, when he is tired, of "another humanity." His judgment of his own country could not be more bitter: "It was my people and my land that made me like this"; "It is stupid to long for Europe; here at least the people know that it's all one single rabble, they read their newspapers, criticize the government, complain about life, and everything turns out all right in the end." Love? The eternal tune: "Fight, forgive, fight." After all, it is a last resort, for "if it did not exist too, what pleasure would there be in life?" Life is useless. Life is full of quadrilles. A quadrille:

João amava Teresa que amava Raimundo

Que amava Maria que amava Joaquim que amava Lili

Que não amava ninguém.

João foi para os Estados Unidos, Teresa para o convento,

Raimundo morreu de desastre, Maria ficou para tia,

Joaquim suicidou-se e Lili casou-se com J. Pinto Fernandes,

Que não tinha entrado na história.

João loved Teresa who loved Raimundo

Who loved Maria who loved Joaquim who loved Lili

Who didn't love anyone.

João went to the United States, Teresa to the convent,

Raimundo died in an accident, Maria remained a spinster,

Joaquim committed suicide, and Lili married J. Pinto

[Fernandes,

Who had had nothing to do with the story.

Life? See how the poet saw it one New Year's morning:

As coisas estão limpas, ordenadas.

O corpo gasto renova-se em espuma.

Todos os sentidos alerta funcionam.

A boca está comendo a vida.

A boca está entupida de vida.

A vida escorre da boca,

Lambuza as mãos, a calçada.

A vida é gorda, oleosa, mortal, sub-reptícia.

Everything is clean, orderly.

The spent body refreshes itself in foam.

All the senses are functioning alertly.

The mouth is devouring life.

(Continued on page 33)



# **from sweatshops** **to** *Salons*

**the saga of New York's garment industry**

**Lillian L. de Tagle**

AS SOON AS a Latin American woman arrives in New York, her eye turns upward to the towering skyscrapers, but the dizziness left by these heights quickly gives way to another that begins in front of the Fifth Avenue windows and continues interminably along the escalators of Macy's, the elevators of Saks, and the carpeted salons of the city's innumerable dress shops.

The Gallup Poll has not got around to finding out how many foreign ladies leave New York unaware of the fabulous museums that have made the city, within a short period, one of the world's cultural centers. There are those who assert with scorn that New York is a horrible and filthy monument of stone and steel, and others who repeat this because negative positions are generally the safest. But to many, the stones of New York are beautiful, because they are inscribed with man-

kind's most ambitious story; one chapter is reflected in the show windows whose glitter blinds many to the rest of the city. That chapter covers more than a hundred years in the city's life and tells of one of its most significant and successful industrial struggles. It is the story of the women's dress industry.

Not long ago, Paris was the undisputed dean in the fashion field, the supreme authority. But it invariably stressed the unique original or copies in numbered editions. Mildred Kaldor, publicity agent for various New York fashion houses, pointed out, by way of contrast, what the garment industry has achieved in the United States.

"U.S. manufacturers, in undertaking volume production, not only have developed an industry that is extraordinarily powerful, but have also given fashion a



*New York garment industry ranges from high-fashion, high-priced creations of temperamental designer Charles James (note sculptured folds, his trade-mark) . . .*



*. . . to attractive, practical outfits for the youngest set*

social meaning it never had before. You will see, as we go through the factories and shops we are to visit tomorrow, that in the United States a woman with even a minimum of purchasing power can dress in good taste from her first birthday to her hundredth. It is easy to understand the social, psychological, and even political implications of this fact. Tell me, have you ever seen a well-dressed woman who was a communist? Fashion has won a definitive victory: it has given women freedom from looking ugly. But there are other, even more significant aspects of this industry, which serves as an incentive for scientific, as well as artistic, creation."

Mildred Kaldor briefed me on the machinery invented to speed mass production that I would see in operation in Joseph Love's factory. This plant turns out eight thousand dresses a day. There, on huge tables, special machines stretch the lengths of material for the mechanical cutter, which delivers eighty-six dozen garments in an hour or less, depending on the operator's skill, and a pattern press stamps through five hundred layers of cloth forming pockets, necklines, or trimmings.

Miss Kaldor went on to tell me about the experiments constantly under way in the laboratories to produce wonder fabrics like nylon and dacron, cottons that look like wool, and pellow, which stays stiff and smooth without ironing or starch. All are the result of studies conducted by legions of scientists engaged in the search for synthetic fibers that not only will have technical virtues that make them superior to their natural counterparts, but also will be more beautiful and colorfast and will offer warmth or coolness to fit the season when they are to be used.

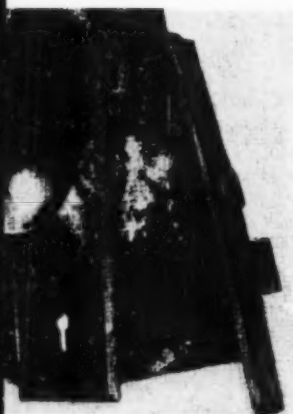
Let's have a look at the history of this industry that is today the second most important in the United States and the first in New York, employing around five hundred thousand people in that city alone, and chalking up sales figures of more than ten billion dollars a year.

In 1860, the census took note of the industry for the first time, giving it symbolic personality just as it was taking a step forward in its evolution, abandoning the old system of individual work at home for the production methods of factories and shops. At this point, public opinion began to blame the garment industry for the alarming drop in the marriage rate, while some economists cited the extravagance of feminine styles as a cause of the industrial crisis.

Beginning in 1880, a large-scale Austrian Jewish immigration gave the industry a firm push, but at the same time it involved what many have called "one of the most sordid chapters in the industrial history of the United States." Contractors waited on the docks for the immigrant ships, to round up workers as soon as they stepped ashore. The trapped victim and his family ended up in workshops that became known as "sweatshops" because of the unsanitary conditions, interminable hours, and wretched wages. The work day had no limit other than the completion of the job. Often the schedule was so heavy that the worker had no time to go home for rest but slept on bundles of clothing, to begin work again after this brief respite. Not until epidemics broke out



*In the nineties and earlier, immigrant labor took bundles of garments to work on in tenement homes*



*Employers locked workers in to prevent union activity. After Triangle factory fire in 1911, in which 154 trapped waist-makers died, bolt on workshop door was found still in place*



*Before specialization of labor and development of large factories, contractors used underpaid workers in noisome sweatshops to fill manufacturers' orders*



did public opinion protest this state of affairs; then women refused to buy dresses made in shops where the workers also cooked, ate, and slept.

In 1886, an organized movement led by a group of intellectuals sprang up to eliminate sweatshops and the system of contractors, who, acting as intermediaries between manufacturer and worker, pocketed the lion's share of the price paid for the bales of clothes, relinquishing only infinitesimal sums for wages. But despite herculean efforts, in 1900 the same conditions prevailed that had made the sweatshops ideal test tubes for the cultivation of tuberculosis, anemia, and rickets, especially for minors, who worked the same exhausting hours as the adults, for the same miserable pittance or less. Then a small union was organized that, in time, was to take on gigantic proportions: the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. For ten years this organization struggled heroically. The employers, at first apathetic over the formation of the union, soon began to wield every weapon they could lay hold of against it, without scruple. Boycotting pickets were brutally assaulted by hired thugs, protest marches were broken up by police nightsticks, and strikers were jailed. Union members were excluded from jobs, and new employees had to post a money guarantee that they would not join the dreaded organization. No sooner did the ILGWU gain ground than it lost it under some maneuver by its more powerful adversaries. For a decade the war went on in the principal centers of the needle trades, from New York to Boston, Chicago, Kansas City, and Philadelphia. In July 1910, a parade of sixty thousand striking workers wound through the streets of New York. That same year, a Peace Protocol was signed reducing work hours to fifty a week, establishing double pay for overtime, and raising wages—with workers' committees to have a voice in setting piecework rates—and requiring the employers to give union members preference in hiring.

Still reforms were slow, especially those concerning sanitation in the workshops and the suppression of certain coercive measures used by the employers. One was the custom of locking the shop doors to prevent workers from joining striking pickets. On March 25, 1911, fire broke out on the eighth floor of the Triangle factory at Washington Place. All doors but one were locked, and within a few minutes the women workers were overcome by panic. The accident took on the dimensions of a catastrophe. Some of the girls, converted into living flames, hurled themselves to the street to meet a quicker death. Corpses piled up on the sidewalk. When firemen were able to make their way into the building, they found the blackened bodies of other operators, who had been too terrified to attempt to escape, at their machines. The 154 victims of this tragedy finally awakened the public's conscience to a situation that, though it then improved, still left much to be desired.

After half a century of hectic existence, the ILGWU can proudly point to an impressive list of achievements. Between 1932 and 1949 its membership rose from forty thousand to 423,000. All members enjoy the benefits union action has won, such as paid vacations, and others

*Striking cloak-makers staged mass demonstration in 1926. Disastrous failure of strike, which called out thirty-five thousand workers, led to expulsion of communist leadership from growing International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union*





*The garment workers today—scene in typical large dress factory*



*Using modern machinery, cutter shapes dozens of garments at once. Each operator performs only one job*



*Pattern-maker takes designer's ideas along first step of road leading to dress shop*



offered by the union itself: health services, technical and art courses, and so on. During World War II, the ILGWU demonstrated that its concern for human welfare does not stop at the national border. In 1941 the union donated three hundred thousand dollars for war victims in Europe; many workers dedicated their spare time to Red Cross work; in 1945 the ILGWU contributed fifty thousand dollars for strengthening free labor unions abroad; the same year it collected the money to pay for a squadron of twenty bomber planes; and its members bought seventy-five million dollars' worth of war bonds. Moreover, the ILGWU maintains industrial schools for orphans and needy children in various parts of the world. There are several in Paris; one in Haifa, Israel; and Italian schools in Rome, Palermo, and Pozzuoli; until China was closed, there was another in Chungking.

The president of the ILGWU is David Dubinsky. Born in Brest-Litovsk, Russian Poland, in 1892, the son of a poor Jewish baker, he quit school at eleven to work with his father in Lodz. Three years later he was a member of the bakers' union and at fifteen was elected secretary of the organization. He was imprisoned after a strike, and the second time the authorities caught him engaged in such activities they deported him to Siberia. In 1910 Dubinsky was granted amnesty and set out for America. Starting out as a dishwasher, he later specialized as a cutter. He played such an outstanding part in union organization that in 1932 he was elected president of the ILGWU. A curious incident that took place in Philadelphia reveals the popularity Dubinsky enjoys on all sides. A strike that had been called was avoided only when the manufacturers agreed to submit the matter to arbitration, stipulating that the arbiter should be David Dubinsky, president of the very organization whose affiliate was involved.

For the past fourteen years, the women's garment industry has managed to solve all its difficulties peacefully, without resort to a strike. The ILGWU receives a special quota from employers that runs to about thirty million dollars a year, and when it decided to establish the New York Dress Institute for training style specialists, the employers were glad to put up the million dollars they were asked to contribute. As Dubinsky says, "We are seriously interested in the employers' profits and in increasing the workers' productive capacity and efficiency, and don't think the employers scorn the suggestions we make to them."

The workshops of the colossal garment industry, which is second in importance only to the nation's food industry, run the gamut from mass production to the creation of exclusive originals. Mildred Kaldor had promised to show me how a woman can dress well from infancy to old age on a modest budget, so we began our tour at the factory of Joseph Love, the man who dresses little girls and who introduced the mother-and-daughter companion style. Love started his business in 1920 with his sixty-dollar mustering-out pay for World War I army duty. Today he has fifteen factories in various parts of the country and one in Puerto Rico.

*(Continued on page 41)*

*Despite mass-production techniques, skilled needlewomen must put the finishing touches on dresses by hand*

# bullfight in CHICAGO

A short story by Héctor Velarde

Illustration by Al Hirschfeld

CHICAGO  
MARCH 10, 1955

SEÑOR DON MANUEL SOLARI S.  
PLAZA DE ACHO  
LIMA, PERU

MY DEAR MANUÉ:

As you know, they now have bullfights in this wonderful country. They were started as part of the celebration of Good Neighbor Day. Of course, they're not exactly like those in the Plaza de Acho, but I will say that the one I have just seen here in Chicago was magnificent. For two sessions, today and Saturday, they signed up the three best Spanish matadors, Chapalito, Carlete, and El Pita: Chapalito for two million dollars, Carlete for two million six hundred thousand, and El Pita for \$825,000. The six bulls were cross-bred with buffalo from the plains of Oklahoma. The stadium was terrific: 350,000 people.

Such shouting! Everyone was placing bets while loud-speakers hawked "Spanish sandwiches," "pandereta nuts," "orange juice from the Alhambra," "hot bull dogs," and so on. A few minutes before the bullfight began, some young fellows dressed as gypsies, the "Triana Boys," circled the arena followed by three small sheep, and in front of the Governor's box they leaped and

shouted "Ra, Ra, Ra, . . . Orehee, Orehoo, Orehaa . . . Ra, Ra, Ra!" (evidently cheering the bull's ear). Then they went off and a big retinue of carriages and horsemen came in through the bullpen door; in the open coaches rode some five layers of pretty girls wearing high combs, shawls, and all that; and on the horses you saw Argentine gauchos, cowboys from the Far West, Mexican *charros*, and *cholos* from Ayacucho. A navy band played *Spain, Beloved Mother* furiously.

Suddenly it sounded as if all the fire sirens in Chicago were screeching at once. It was the signal for the troupe to come out. They didn't have any master of ceremonies. The party was headed by a stupendous girl with a 3-D figure, dressed like the Flit soldiers, who set the pace of the procession on a prancing horse. With an enormous key—the key to the bullpen—she led the band in the march tune. Behind her came the musicians dressed as Moors with gilded homburgs on their heads. Hubba, Hubba, Hubba! You know what I mean. Next Chapalito, Carlete, and El Pita, very elegantly gotten up. Behind them the *banderilleros* and helpers, all Americans from the Boston school of bullfighting. Then there was a small division of little tanks with picadors on board, a group of nurses with litters, the clean-up men protected with baseball masks and knee-pads, a cordon of police and a parallel cordon of firemen in stiff, wide-brimmed Cordova

hats, and finally, the mascot of the troupe: a baby elephant.

The whistling was deafening—here they whistle when they like something. I asked what the little tanks were for and they told me that the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals had eliminated the picadors' horses and introduced other modifications. For example, to acknowledge a good performance they do not cut off an ear, tail, or foot; they saw off the bull's horn with a little electric saw. Thus a bullfighter may win one, two, or up to a dozen horns in one afternoon.

Once again all the sirens in Chicago wailed, and the bullpen door opened. Out came an enraged beast, half bull and half buffalo, with a big sign on his belly: "Drink Ice-Cold Coca-Cola." Then I noticed that his horns were yellow. "Do they paint them?" I asked. "No, they grease them with penicillin," a well-informed lady explained.

It was El Pita's bull. El Pita executed three masterly veronicas and I thought the world had come to an end. A group of Spanish experts gave the signal for an ovation, and then the applause machines went on along with 350,000 catcalls and whistles, twelve bands with each musician taking off on his own, and an apparatus that rattled away like a machine gun: "*Olé, Olé, Olé, Olé, Olé, Olé, Olé...*"

Again the sirens, and out came the little tanks. Here it doesn't make any difference whether the bull is in the mood or not. A little tank camouflaged as a bit of forest pulls up with a picador on top, and while the bull approaches to eat the foliage the picador applies a kind of bazooka to his back—ta-ta-ta-ta—like a drill. That took care of the piquing. The bull fled, and the sirens sounded again for the banderillas.

During the picadors' turn almost all the spectators got up in a big hurry to get some "orange juice from the Alhambra," to relieve themselves, and to see how the betting was going on who would win, the matador or the bull.

The placing of the banderillas is something special. They have springs and are wrapped in cellophane. The bullfighters from the Boston school place them like men hurling harpoons wrapped in colored paper at whales. They do not fling them in pairs. They never miss. All at once. Very interesting. But at this point something terrible happened. What a scare! Just imagine—Johnny Maxwell, who is a very good banderillero, fell to the ground, and the bull charged at him. "He killed him!" I exclaimed, covering my eyes. When I looked again Johnny had disappeared and the people were ever so calm. What had happened? Well, in this bullring they don't have escape doors in the fence but trapdoors in the floor. A mechanic watches at his control panel. Is there danger in one sector? He presses a button and the ground swallows the bullfighter. They tell me that sometimes the bull goes down with three or four men.

When the sirens announced the last act of the little drama, two jet planes crossed the sky, swooping over the stadium and dumping heaps of advertising handbills so unexpectedly and violently that a bunch suddenly

landed in my mouth while I was looking up and I had to swallow one. They dealt with the political campaign of Mr. Francis Clyton, a true Hispanicist. While I was getting the papers out of my mouth, El Pita dedicated the bull to the Governor and tossed him his cap. The Governor, delighted, put on the cap and thanked El Pita for the bull over the loudspeaker, announcing that he was giving him a *Frigidaire*.

El Pita called the bull. Nothing happened. El Pita called him three times. Nothing happened. Then an armored jeep came out at full speed with a doctor and two nurses and, in a flash, they gave the bull an injection of adrenalin. The jeep withdrew, and the bull, after jumping four times like a goat, attacked El Pita, who executed sixteen *manoletinas* in a row and a new pass called "the bee's stinger."

The group of Spanish experts gave the ovation signal, and delirium broke loose.

El Pita was not very felicitous with the sword. He pierced the bull badly, cutting the tendons of his hind parts. The bull squatted. I asked why he didn't bleed, and a man explained to me that they had treated him with coagulants before the fight. Good. There was a long silence. Here you are not allowed to kill twice. A man dressed in white and holding a watch moved in between the bull and El Pita, and began to count: one, two, three, four, five. . . . He was the referee. If the bull doesn't die in 120 seconds, the bull wins; if he is good and dead in 120 seconds, the bull loses. This time the bull won. When the referee blew the whistle after 120 seconds, I was practically asleep, and a shove from the man behind me, who had bet against El Pita with the man in front of me, almost knocked me down.

Since the bull would die eventually anyway but the use of the dagger to finish him off is prohibited by the Abel Group—who are friends of man (bulls included)—the jeep came out again with the doctor and nurses and they dispatched him very gently with a hypodermic injection of morphine. Finally one of those machines they call bulldozers, which lift tons of dirt, appeared, jammed its blade under the bull, lifted him in the air, and carried him off in triumph, roaring around the arena at full speed, the caterpillar tread clanging to the music of the twelve bands and the shouts and whistles of 350,000 people. The spectacle was really stupendous. Once they had carried the bull out, calm more or less returned, and betting began again, along with taking refreshments, visiting the men's room, and making your way back to your seat, until the sirens announced the entrance of the second bull.

The second of the afternoon was for Carlete; he was immense and very brave, and had the face of a seal. His name was "Cuddie-cuddie." But no use going on with the details. It was the same, just the same; you know how well organized they are here. The next series will be held in Detroit, in the new Ford arena holding 428,000 spectators. I'll tell you about it.

How is building going in Lima?

Regards to Josefina.

HECTORETE



## POETS WITHOUT READERS

(Continued from page 5)

connected series of rhapsodies) is a malformed epic, but it contains some of the richest writing of the period. The opening lines of his hymn to the machine indicate his singular quality:

The nasal whine of power whips a new universe . . .  
Where spouting pillars spoor the evening sky,  
Under the looming stacks of the gigantic power-house  
Stars prick the eyes with sharp ammoniac proverbs,  
New verities, new inklings in the velvet hummed  
Of dynamos, where hearing's leash is strummed.

Another poet whose idiom is strikingly individual and involved is the creator of extraordinary sound-and-color effects, Wallace Stevens, who was mentioned in a preceding paragraph. Superficially regarded, Stevens seems to be the painter among the poets: his outstanding effects are visual, intricately patterned, delicately shaped. One of his most recent books, *The Man with the Blue Guitar*, was a self-acknowledging tribute to Pablo Picasso, the bewildering and, to many, baffling painter of carefully dislocated details. Stevens has been called both a symbolist and an abstractionist whose art is "beyond good and evil, beyond hope and despair, even beyond thought." Chiefly, however, he is a rhetorician, although his rhetoric is anything but orthodox. He uses a language which is highly decorated, involuted, florid, and rococo. He delights to mingle all the sensations—sight, sound, taste, touch, smell—in what he calls "the essential gaudiness of poetry." His celebrated "Sunday Morning" begins:

Complacencies of the peignoir, and late  
Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,  
And the green freedom of a cockatoo  
Upon a rug mingle to dissipate  
The holy hush of ancient sacrifice.

Another who has bent the language to achieve new intensities of sound and idea is Robert Lowell. Still in his mid-thirties, Lowell, like Eliot, protests against the commercialism and corruption of the times; like Crane, he uses a swiftness of metaphor which achieves a tension and an impact so violent as to seem physical. The transitions are sudden; the images flash by; the allusions are so complex that the reader cannot always follow them. Lowell is not only a definitely emotional but a deeply religious poet. His "Colloquy in Black Rock" ends:

Christ walks on the black water. In black mud  
Darts the kingfisher. On Corpus Christi, heart,  
Over the drum-beat of St. Stephen's choir  
I hear him, *Stupor Mundi*, and the mud  
Flies from his hunching wings and beak—my heart,  
The blue kingfisher dives on you in fire.

There are several women poets whose work may be found in the numerous anthologies and standard textbooks of the country. The popularity of Edna St. Vincent Millay, who died in 1950, has dwindled, although only ten years ago she and Robert Frost were the nation's favorite poets. Today her poems seem too smoothly contrived, the accent too traditional, the mood too easily summoned; but her lyrics and resounding, if rhetorical, sonnets are still widely reprinted. More esteemed, though probably less read, are the sensitized, bell-like, and vesperal measures of Louise Bogan; the half-ecstatic, half-metaphysical, and altogether reticent music of Léonie

Adams; the lively, satirical yet sympathetic, subtleties of Elizabeth Bishop; the troubled, socially conscious, and warm emotionalism of Muriel Rukeyser. The most distinguished of present-day women poets, Marianne Moore, is in a class so completely her own that she escapes classification and categories. Her lines combine the closest observation and the nimblest imagination; her poems are triumphs of sense and sensibility—they evoke (to use her phrase) "real toads in imaginary gardens." Her images are exact and yet fantastic: the elephant is "black earth preceded by a tendril"; the lizard is "a nervous naked sword on little feet"; the immovable critic "twitching his skin like a horse that feels a flea." The mind, says Miss Moore:

is an enchanting thing,  
like the glaze on a  
katydid-wing  
subdivided by sun  
till the nettings are legion.

There are those who claim that Miss Moore makes a witty kind of montage of things seen and things recalled, that hers is not so much poetry as a kind of rhythmical geometry. Miss Moore would be the first to disclaim any pretensions to enlarging the scope of poetry, even though the many honors she has received attest that she has done so. Nothing could be more modest than her acceptance of three different national awards received about a year ago. She said: "I can see no reason for calling my work poetry except that there is no other category in which to put it. Anyone could do what I do, and I am, therefore, the more grateful that those whose judgment I trust should regard it as poetry."

There is not sufficient time or space to list all the other estimable poets who, each in his own way, have claims upon any literary historian. Of the lyricists one thinks first of Conrad Aiken and Archibald MacLeish, both of whom have been the recipients of various awards; of John Crowe Ransom, who has perfected a playful, semi-acrid, and pseudo-archaic accent of his own; of Langston Hughes, who has spoken for the Negro in his inimitable "blues"; of E. E. Cummings, who, in spite of syntactical distortions and typographical eccentricities, is a genuine and memorably lyrical voice. Since this is a merely suggestive article—not a complete bibliography on one hand or, on the other, an indication of future ranking in order of eminence—no attempt will be made at prophecy. Nevertheless, there is an unaffiliated group of younger writers, all of them under forty, who are already winning enviable commendation. Although they have different metiers and sometimes opposed points of view, they have in common a clarity of vision, a distinction of utterance, and that touch which is hard to define but which is immediately recognized as originality. A list of such younger poets would necessarily include Karl Shapiro, Delmore Schwartz, Randall Jarrell, Peter Viereck, Robert Lowell, Richard Wilbur, and Howard Moss.

"To have great poets," said Whitman, "we must have great audiences, too." We have the poets—and we have a potential audience of incalculable millions. If only we could get them together! ♦ ♦ ♦



a word  
with  
**SARITA  
GLÓRIA**



LAST CHRISTMAS, when Alfred Friendly of the *Washington Post* composed his traditional rhymed Yule greetings for the paper, he mentioned, along with national celebrities, "a Brazilian thrush named Sarita Glória." He was referring to a young singer from Rio de Janeiro who had arrived in the United States virtually unknown two years ago and had just performed a small miracle for a beginner by recording thirteen Brazilian songs on a long-playing Victor record.

The disc won immediate acclaim. Music critic Paul Hume said Miss Glória has "a beautiful voice which she uses with telling effect." Robert Kotlowitz, in the magazine *High Fidelity*, referred to her as "a fresh-voiced soprano," who sings "charming arrangements" of her native songs. Her style is reminiscent of another Brazilian's, the late Elsie Houston, whose records were collectors' items until a recent re-issue.

We spent a couple of hours one afternoon talking about her budding career. "The trouble is that when you mention Brazilian music to people in the United States, they think either of Villa Lobos or of Carmen Miranda," Sarita said. "A composer in New York once told me there wasn't much to our music. I'd like to prove he's wrong. There's a lot to it and a great variety of style. I brought with me two hundred songs by different Brazilian composers."

"But isn't your repertoire mostly folk songs?"

"Not necessarily. Unfortunately, when I made the record for RCA they didn't have enough space on the jacket to explain that most of the songs are 'serious' music and original compositions, though many are based on folk literature. As a matter of fact, I was trained as a lieder singer."

"Whom did you study with?" I inquired.

"Several teachers, but I especially remember my very first, M. Oscar de Beauvais, a French composer in Rio. He used to tell me one must sing with complete naturalness. And that, strange as it may seem, requires years of training. That's why I think people are wrong when they say 'educated' voices can't sing folk songs. Look at Mattia Battistini, Richard Tauber, or Victoria de los Angeles, for instance. Of course one doesn't sing folk songs like opera or lieder." Sarita burst forth with a few full-throated bars from Schubert's famous *Wohin*, then rapidly switched over to snatches of a Brazilian song by Hekel Tavares. "You see?"

Then she complained: "Sometimes, when I talk about Brazilian songs, people expect me to sing *sambas* and *marchas*. Mind you, I love them too, but I'm afraid they aren't my style any more than songs like *Basin Street Blues* are Risë Stevens'."

I asked Sarita whether music was an early vocation with her. She nodded: "Yes, my father wanted me to study medicine or law, but I put my foot down."

One could sense the self-assurance and determination of this girl, who has already appeared on several radio and TV programs in the nation's capital, has sung in the choir of the Mount Vernon Methodist Church, and has been a soloist in various concerts in Washington, including a recent one at the Pan American Union. She hopes to give another

at the Public Library in New York.

From nine to five, Sarita keeps busy at a white-collar job with the Inter-American Defense Board, where she puts to good use some of the languages she knows so well (aside from her native Portuguese, she speaks English, Russian, German, and Rumanian).

"Is your linguistic agility a result of your singing?"

"Mostly, yes. As I became interested in the music of a given country I studied the language to know what I was singing. At one time or another I have taken up the music of Italy, Russia, Rumania, Spain, France, the United States, Israel, and Finland."

"Finnish music," I observed, "seems rather remote in Brazil. How did you ever learn the language?"

"Well, you see, I had always admired Sibelius, and when I was working at a radio station in Rio I met a couple from the Finnish legation who did a special program beamed to Finland. Their name was Mäkelä. Of course we talked about music. They ended up lending me some scores of Finnish music. I liked it so much I wanted to learn the language. Then I met a Finnish musician who taught it to me."

"What kind of songs were they?"

"Extremely sentimental—a curious thing, when everybody imagines Scandinavians to be cold, unemotional people."

"How about Rumanian songs?"

"The folk songs have a great deal of Greek influence."

I still wanted to know how Sarita had happened to make her Red Seal recording. I asked her whether she had an agent in New York.

"No." She shrugged off her accomplishment lightly. "I just went there to see the recording companies and got an audition with RCA. I played some records of classical songs I had made in Brazil. But the directors were more interested in Brazilian music and asked me to sing some. That's how I landed the contract. I was happy they let me choose the songs, because I managed to include nine different contemporary composers."

Sarita's accompanist on the record is Anthony Chanaka, a well-known Washington pianist, who has an amazing facility for playing what Paul Hume calls the "tricky and subtle" piano accompaniments to her Brazilian songs. RCA had thought of using an orchestra at first, to show the variety and richness of the music, but changed their minds when they heard Mr. Chanaka.

We played the record. Each song was distinct from the next, yet all were genuinely Brazilian. The lovely, plaintive melody of Jayme Ovalle's *Azulão* (Bluebird), which is a plea to the bluebird to "go tell that ungrateful man that the country is not the same without him" contrasted sharply with the tongue-twisting, onomatopoeic quality of Hekel Tavares' *Dança de caboclo* (Country Dance); Waldemar Henrique's *Abaluaie*, a voodoo invocation sung in Portuguese and African dialect, suggests the strong African influence in the northern part of Brazil; Villa Lobos' arrangement of the eighteenth-century children's rhyme *A gatinha parda* (The Dark Kitten) preserves the delightful innocence and simplicity of the original; Oswaldo de Souza's *Querer bem não é pecado* (It's No Sin to Be in Love) explains that "love was established by God, so obviously it's not a sin," while Francisco Mignone's *Canção das mães pretas* (Song of the Black Mammies) lulls a white child to sleep with "sleep, sleep my precious little doll, sleep and dream of the ones you love."

Sarita's voice ran beautifully through them all. It left me a bit homesick.—*Benedicta S. Monsen*

# OAS

## FOTO FLASHES



**In Washington** at the invitation of the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, a number of delegates to the Seventh International Conference of Social Work, which had been held earlier in Canada at the University of Toronto, paid a visit to the Pan American Union, where they met and talked with various officials, including Beryl Frank (right) of the labor and social affairs division. The social workers meet once every two years in a different country. At this year's Toronto Conference, some 2,400 of them from forty-eight countries met to discuss the theme "Promoting Social Welfare Through Self-Help and Cooperative Action."



**During his recent visit** to Washington, Dr. Ricardo Rivera Schreiber (right) Peruvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, paused to greet OAS Ambassador César Tulio Delgado of Colombia. The occasion was the special session of the OAS Council held in the Foreign Minister's honor, followed by a luncheon given by Council members.



**"For her more than a decade** of constructive work with the librarians of the other Americas," Marietta Daniels (center), associate librarian of the Columbus Memorial Library at the Pan American Union, received one of two annual "Letter" Awards given at the Seventy-Third Annual Conference of the American Library Association in Minneapolis. Pictured with her are Annadele Riley (left) of the U.S. Information Library in Casablanca, Morocco, and Eleanor Mitchell, former director of the U.S. Information Libraries in Italy. The other "Letter" Award went to the Boston Public Library. They are donated by Mrs. Ada McCormick of Tucson, Arizona, publisher of *Letter* magazine.



**At a recent concert** in the Aztec Garden of the Pan American Union, Miss Olguita Fariña of Chile, a soprano, appeared on a program that also included the music of the U.S. Army Band. Educated in Santiago as a singer and ballerina, Miss Fariña sang in opera and over radio stations there, then moved on to Buenos Aires to appear on television. She now resides in the United States, where she has also been on television and is studying voice. Her PAU recital included songs of her native land and other Latin American countries.

**At the opening** in the Pan American Union of the exhibition of five modern painters of Venezuela, Dr. Carlos Pérez de la Cova, Venezuelan Chargé d'Affaires in Washington (left), and Dr. Martín Ayala Aguerrevere, Interim Representative of Venezuela on the OAS Council, discussed their reactions to the various works. Modern art in the South American country has moved toward the abstract in the past ten years. All of the painters, who included Mario Abreu, Armando Barrios, Angel Humberto Jaimes Sánchez, Mateo Manaure, and Oswaldo Vigas, were represented in the Second Biennial Art Exhibition held recently at São Paulo, Brazil.



## FIVE VOICES OF SPANISH AMERICA

(Continued from page 8)

its author's suicidal decision to combine the poet of *Residencia en la Tierra* (*Residence on Earth*, translated by Angel Flores) with the politician whose spiritual residence is in Russia.

The other original contribution Chile—and Neruda in particular—has made to Spanish American poetry is the reevaluation and reinstatement of romanticism. Except in the work of Bécquer, Spanish-language poetry had only the most superficial acquaintance with the true romantic movement. Our literature was the poorer for this gap, which we filled with false and bombastically sentimental lyrics that only served to hide the genuine values of romanticism (such as were offered to us, for example, by Germany or by our own classical tradition). Not until Neruda appeared did our poetry regain these old unexplored or lost territories, so appropriate for America. Using the newest resources and elements, Neruda reestablished the climate for true romantic creation, glorifying the heart again, submerging himself in the irrationality of the world, giving back to words their magic and prophetic powers, and opening the doors of dream and nostalgia. "I have a dramatic and romantic concept of life," he has written. "What does not reach deep to my sensibility does not suit me." He sings, in his *Arte Poética*:

Entre sombra y espacio, entre  
[guarniciones y doncellas,  
dotado de corazón singular y  
[sueños funestos . . .

Between shadow and space,  
[between garrisons and  
[maidens,  
endowed with singular  
[heart and doleful dreams . . .

Because of these two fundamental contributions and because he has also created an original poetic language full of rich possibilities, Pablo Neruda, the voice of Chile, must be chosen as one of the five representative poets of Spanish America.

### Ricardo Molinari

In Ricardo Molinari (born in Argentina in 1908) I find the quintessence of the Atlantic zone—the characteristics and peculiarities of that other side of American poetry, influenced most directly by Europe. By choosing him, I am of course committing obvious injustices. If, for example, I wanted to emphasize only the contributions of this zone to a *criollo* poetic idiom or those dealing with the poet's relationship with the landscape or with his surroundings, I should have to choose Ricardo Güiraldes of Argentina, Fernán Silva Valdés of Uruguay, or, above all, the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges, who sings colloquially of the metropolis of Buenos Aires in somewhat the manner of Carl Sandburg. Or Leopoldo Marechal, for another view of the characteristic southern blending of *criollo* elements. Here Molinari is much less expressive; to be sure, he makes affectionate use of the *criollo* vocabulary to give his poems, as one critic puts it, "an air of authenticity and spreading roots," but local color is not strong in his work. If, on the other hand, I were trying to emphasize the adherence of this zone to tradition, the readiness of the Indies (as opposed to the resistance of the Indian) to make use of the Spanish heritage, I should have to

cite the Argentine Francisco Luis Bernárdez, author of *La Ciudad sin Laura*. Finally, if I wanted to emphasize American experience with the newer European trends, I should have to point to the Uruguayans Roberto Ibáñez and Julio Casal or to poets of other Atlantic latitudes, such as the Cubans Eugenio Florit and Emilio Ballagas. But in a sense Molinari unites or suggests all these aspects of Atlantic poetry; at the same time, he develops them in a way that contrasts more sharply with Pacific attitudes. He is the symbol of a poetic expression more isolated in its land, more closely linked with Europe, less "primitive" (and more "Renaissance"), purer, more intellectual, than that of Vallejo or Neruda.

Let us begin with Molinari's traditionalism. In his books *El Pez y la Manzana* (*The Fish and the Apple*), *Delta*, or *Cancionero del Príncipe de Vergara* (*Song Book of the Prince of Vergara*), he exemplifies the ease with which the *criollo* connects himself with the traditional current.

El laurel a su favor  
vuelta. Si olvidos tuvo, hoy el  
[tordo  
sobre sus ramas canta. Volador  
obscuro. Manso pico. (En la  
[fragua  
del día luce alegre. La callada  
infancia del clavel lo mira.)  
[Nada  
lo distrae. Cantar, dichoso día.

Let the laurel return  
to favor. If it was forgotten,  
[today the thrush  
on its branches sings. Dark  
flyer. Gentle beak. (In the forge  
of the day it shines gaily. The  
[silent  
childhood of the carnation  
[watches it). Nothing  
distracts it. Sing, happy day.

Through him Góngora has reached the solitude of the South—in a *time* sense, not in a *space* sense. But then, space did not interest Góngora. The reality surrounding him never mattered, only esthetic distortions of it or its suggestion of nature read about in books—the pastoralism of the Renaissance.

Sometimes, Molinari looses his hold on the hand of tradition and wanders alone through his spacious South. Then he establishes a relationship with the landscape—not the strong ties we find in Güiraldes, Borges, or Marechal, but a tenuous one, as if seeing the landscape with new eyes, the eyes of an immigrant who lacks the support of ancient atavism. Something unconquered and elusive inspires Molinari.

If Vallejo's element is the dark germinal land or the anguish lying deep in the race, if Neruda explores nature with a tireless hand that touches everything, then Molinari's element is wind—the old visual element of the Greeks where ideas were born, where nature is externalized and arranged into landscape and things are washed clean and prepare to become concepts:

¡Ay, el viento! La airosa  
claridad . . .

Oh, the wind! The airy  
clarity . . .

Wind is the endless evanescent tie of the primordial with the civilized, the link between it and the West, the mental Atlantic.

In a beautiful poem in the *Hostería de la Rosa y el Clavel* (*The Inn of the Rose and Carnation*), Molinari enumerates his southern themes:

El lamento de toda mi exis-  
tencia, lo que a mí solo me  
[interesa:  
el muro violento, la llanura, mi  
[país,

The lament of all my existence,  
[all that interests me:  
the violent wall, the plain, my  
[country,  
a woman lost



una mujer perdida  
en una plaza  
llena de pescadores; el río,  
¡el Oeste,  
mi malhumor y un sello de  
¡correos.

The "violent wall" is his solitude. The "postage stamp" is nostalgia, the complementary "other world" of Atlantic poetry, which Molinari develops so well in his poems on the sea. These are the most beautiful sea poems written on this continent, which is the child of nostalgic mariners.

*El mar, el acechado mar  
de los navegantes, sirena  
entre muros de tierra, solo.  
Destino menor en la hoja  
de la fábula, que no lo quiso  
en palmas y ondas moderadas.  
Perdida noche en linde cano,  
huerto transparente con ángeles  
marineros que cuidan plantas  
de hojas alternas. Verdes  
¡playas.  
Delfines que quiebran el agua  
en nuevos espacios de  
¡espuma. . .*

These examples give an idea of Molinari's poetic world: its tradition; its purity; its transparent forms; its overtones, such as are found in Bécquer; its fleeting contacts with contemporary French and German poetry; its tenuous ties with the landscape; its solitude; its southern voice; its insistent Atlantic Ocean—in short, the elements that make it representative of a vast zone that has brought Europe to America.

#### Octavio Paz

Since the new Mexican poetry was begun by Ramón López Velarde, and in view of the strongly marked cultural personality of Mexico, it might be expected to bring with it the originality of expression and the transformation of native material so typical of contemporary Mexican painting. Not at all. "The new Mexican poets," as one of them, Xavier Villaurrutia, has said, "keep their poetry far from contact with the popular." Not that they suffer, as in other zones where the roots are shallower or the European influence predominates, from a scarcity of indigenous resources; on the contrary, they voluntarily renounce extraordinary natural riches. They have done so in favor of poetic trends assimilated from foreign literature (especially French) and, what is more interesting, in favor of a poetic tradition belonging to Mexico itself. This, stemming from Góngora's *culteranismo* and avoiding the rich vernacular, has created a body of cultivated poetry—or, better, a literary Mexico cut off from the real one, with characteristics of its own that remain constant all through the neoclassical, romantic, modernist, and present periods. Only here and there do a few poets seek a link between the two Mexicos. López Velarde was one; among the newer poets, and more weakly, Carlos Pellicer is another. One wonders whether the absorptive power of Mexico is so great that it puts poets on the defensive. Here, where conditions for a poetry of tremendous vitality—something like pre-classical Spanish poetry—are most auspicious, there has

in a plaza  
full of fishermen; the river,  
[the West.  
my ill-humor, and a postage  
[stamp.

The sea, the mariners' sea  
in ambush, calls  
between walls of earth, alone.  
A minor destiny in the leaf  
of fable, which did not want it  
in palms and moderate waves.  
Lost night in hoary boundary,  
transparent orchard with marine  
angels that tend plants  
with alternate leaves. Green  
[beaches.  
Dolphins that break the water  
in new shapes of foam. . .

arisen instead a poetry in a minor key, intimate, bathed in melancholy; a poetry generally introverted, preferring themes of emptiness and absence and attracted above all by death. I find the solution in contradiction: both are Mexico, which is a land of antithesis, a culture in formation.

The new Mexican poetry may be grouped into two principal movements—that of the "Contemporáneos" and later that of the magazine *El Hijo Pródigo*. To the first belong Jaime Torres Bodet, Carlos Pellicer, Salvador Novo, Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano, and others; to the second, Xavier Villaurrutia, Gilberto Owen, José Gorostiza, and Alí Chumacero. But I have chosen Octavio Paz, one of the youngest, for besides revealing the features common to his colleagues and predecessors, he also attempts, in a countermove, to imbue his poetry with some of the forbidden warmth of life. And he attempts an integration of Mexican elements that bears a faint resemblance to what has been achieved in painting by Rufino Tamayo, though his contacts with Mexico are made in a somnolent, surrealist, and almost fleeing fashion, as if he were a nocturnal, clandestine visitor to López Velarde's "suave patria."

*Cae la noche sobre Teotihuacán.  
En lo alto de la pirámide los  
[muchachos fuman  
[marihuana,  
suenan guitarras roncacas.  
¿Qué yerba, qué agua de vida  
[ha de darnos vida,  
dónde desenterrar la palabra,  
la proporción que rige al himno  
[y al discurso,  
al baile, a la ciudad y a la  
[balanza?  
El canto mexicano estalla en  
[un carajo,  
estrella de colores que se apaga,  
piedra que nos cierra las puer-  
[tas del contacto.  
Sabe la tierra a tierra  
[envejecida.*

Night falls on Teotihuacán.  
On top of the pyramid the boys  
[smoke marihuana,  
and play hoarse guitars.  
What herb, what water of life  
[will give us life,  
where is the word to be  
[unearthed,  
the proportion that governs the  
[hymn and the speech,  
the dance, the city, and the  
[scale?  
The Mexican song explodes  
[in a curse,  
a colored star that goes out,  
a stone that shuts the doors of  
[contact on us.  
The earth tastes like aged earth.

In this verse from the *Himno entre Ruinas* (Hymn Among Ruins), Paz puts into a question all the drama of Mexican poetry: "Where is the word to be un-





earthed. . . ?" How is a poetic language to be extracted from the Mexican people and earth that will find a universal echo without losing its authenticity? Let us stop a moment and pursue the comparison with Tamayo. Tamayo is a reply to Paz's question: using all the latest resources (the school of Paris, Picasso, Klee, Miró, and so on), Tamayo succeeds in dislodging the "stone that shuts the doors of contact" and synthesizes the new and the permanent, the original and the native, the pure and the popular. It is precisely in Paz's inability, expressed dramatically in his question, to do what Tamayo has done that I find the quality that makes him representative. For the plastic arts alone have expressed the essence of this culture; the written word swings dizzily between being buried in folklore and fleeing—by the Atlantic Ocean, whence, like Quetzalcoatl, it came—toward universality, but with an exile's melancholy.

Paz does seek to unearth the word. But he chooses the roughest surrealist road, and thus when he makes contact it is with the deepest and most obscure strata of Mexico, the sub-Mexico of archeology. His most interesting images and landscapes seem to come from mysterious excavations.

*Amé la gloria de boca livida y* I loved glory with its livid  
[ojos de diamante, [mouth and diamond eyes,  
*amé el amor, amé sus labios y su* I loved love, I loved its lips and  
[calavera, [its skull,  
he sings in *Soliloquio de Medianoche* (Midnight Soliloquy), reconstructing the imperishable Aztec statue of Glory. But few poems have achieved a more beautiful fusion of pre-Columbian Indian art and the dream world of surrealism than *Visitas*, which I give in full:

<i>A través de la noche urbana</i>	Through the urban night of
<i>de piedra y sequía</i>	[stone and drought
<i>entra el campo a mi cuarto.</i>	the country enters my room.
<i>Alarga brazos verdes con</i>	It stretches out green arms
<i>[pulseras de pájaros,</i>	[with bracelets of birds,
<i>con pulseras de hojas.</i>	with bracelets of leaves.
<i>Lleva un río de la mano.</i>	It holds a river by the hand.
<i>El cielo del campo también</i>	The sky of the country enters
<i>[entra,</i>	[too,
<i>con su cesta de joyas acabadas</i>	with its basket of freshly cut
<i>[de cortar.</i>	[gems.
<i>Y el mar se sienta junto a mí,</i>	And the sea sits down beside
<i>extendiendo su cola blanquísima</i>	[me,
<i>[en el suelo.</i>	extending its white tail along
<i>Del silencio brota un árbol de</i>	[the floor.
<i>[música.</i>	From the silence a tree bursts
<i>Del árbol cuelgan todas las</i>	[into music.
<i>[palabras hermosas,</i>	From the tree hang all the
<i>que brillan, maduran, caen.</i>	[beautiful words,
<i>En mi frente, cueva que habita</i>	which sparkle, ripen, fall.
<i>[un relámpago . . .</i>	Opposite me, a cave where
<i>Pero todo se ha poblado de alas.</i>	[lightning lives . . .
<i>Dime ¿es de veras el campo que</i>	But all has been filled with
<i>[viene tan lejos</i>	[wings.
<i>o eres tú, son los sueños que</i>	Tell me, is it really the country
<i>[sueñas a mi lado?</i>	[coming from so far
	or is it you, is it the dreams you
	[are dreaming beside me?

But as I have said, Paz is only a nocturnal and clandestine visitor to his lost Mexico. Night and sleep prevent him from knowing and dominating it:

<i>La noche con olas azules va</i>	The night with blue waves is
<i>[borrando estas palabras</i>	[erasing these words
<i>escritas con mano ligera en la</i>	written lightly on the palm of
<i>[palma del sueño.</i>	[sleep.

After running through the dead myths—the Mexican myths that are sleeping too—the poet goes hand in hand with Paul Eluard and even the Marquis de Sade toward an infernal solitude, toward other, hopelessly opaque myths, as if on an Egyptian funeral voyage through the unending darkness of the realm of the dead. His vitality is consumed, drugged with morphine:

<i>Intenté salir a la noche</i>	I planned to go out by night
<i>y al alba comulgar con los que</i>	and in the dawn commune with
<i>[sufren,</i>	[those who suffer,
<i>mas como el rayo al caminante</i>	but as a thunderbolt strikes the
<i>[solitario</i>	[solitary wanderer
<i>sobrecogió a mi espíritu una</i>	a livid certainty seized my
<i>[livida certidumbre:</i>	[spirit:
<i>había muerto el sol y una eterna</i>	the sun had died and an eternal
<i>[noche amanecía,</i>	[night was breaking,
<i>más negra y más oscura que la</i>	blackest and darker than the
<i>[otra,</i>	[other,
<i>y el mundo, los árboles, los</i>	and the world, the trees, men,
<i>[hombres, todo, yo mismo,</i>	[everything, I myself,
<i>sólo éramos los fantasmas de</i>	were only the ghosts of my
<i>[mi sueño,</i>	[sleep,
<i>un sueño eterno, ya sin día ni</i>	an eternal sleep, with no day or
<i>[despertar posible,</i>	[awakening possible,
<i>un sueño al que ya no mojaría</i>	a sleep the silent foam of dawn
<i>[la callada espuma del alba,</i>	[would never drench,
<i>un sueño para el que nunca</i>	a dream for which the trumpets
<i>[sonarían las trompetas del</i>	[of Final Judgment would
<i>[Juicio Final.</i>	[never blow.
<i>Porque nada, ni siquiera la</i>	For nothing, not even death,
<i>[muerte, acabará con este</i>	[will end this sleep.
<i>[sueño.</i>	

But as the Portuguese Pessoa said, "to pretend is to know oneself," and hardly is the fiction of the dream suspended when the poet reestablishes himself in the drama, where the "Mexican song explodes in a curse" and the anguish of expressing oneself assails and probes, as in his powerful little poem *Las Palabras* (Words):

<i>Dáles la vuelta,</i>	Turn them around,
<i>cógelas del rabo (chillen,</i>	catch them by the tail (shriek,
<i>[putas),</i>	[whores),
<i>azótalas,</i>	whip them,
<i>dáles azúcar en la boca a las</i>	feed sugar to the obstinate ones,
<i>[rejetas,</i>	inflate them, balloons, prick
<i>inflalas, globos, pínchalas,</i>	[them,
<i>sórbenles sangre y tuétanos,</i>	suck their blood and marrow,
<i>sécalas</i>	dry them,
<i>cápalas,</i>	castrate them,
<i>písalas, gallo galante,</i>	rape them, gallant cock,
<i>tuérceles el gaznate, cocinero,</i>	wring their necks, cook,
<i>desplúmalas,</i>	pluck them,
<i>destripalas, toro,</i>	disembowel them, bull,
<i>buey, arrástralas,</i>	ox, drag them,
<i>hazlas, poeta,</i>	make them, poet,
<i>haz que se traguen todas sus</i>	make all your words be
<i>[palabras.</i>	[swallowed.

This is the mysterious gift of Octavio Paz—to express the anguish of the new Mexican writing, severed from itself.

### Joaquín Pasos

The contribution of Central American poetry may be defined as an attempt at integration of the two great American poetic currents, the Atlantic and the Pacific. In its anxiety to grasp all the poetic trends of the world, there is no antagonism toward the vernacular and popular, as in Mexico, nor is vigor sacrificed to rules or to the desire for originality. Instead, these elements are balanced by a deeply American will to assimilate, seek-

ing a new universalism and a new humanism that will grow spontaneously from native roots. This kind of poetry, which may be called "neo-Mediterranean," has been written since the bonds of provincialism in Central America were broken by Darío. "Rubén Darío was the outlet to the sea" and "by himself gave America more maritime routes than the Panama Canal," says the poet Ernesto Cardenal. But the change was dizzying. So rapidly did shut-in localism give way to shoddy exoticism that a "new poetry" arose in Central America, characterized by a reaction against Darío and a return to the earth. A return, however, that did not reject the voyage, worked for a reestablishment of balance, and from the beginning resulted in an attempt at synthesis. All the leading Central American poets show this attitude to a greater or lesser degree—Miguel Angel Asturias, combining the ancient Maya traditions with the newest inventions of world poetry in sonorous, enthralling Spanish; Salomón de la Selva, always asserting his American-ness in his boldest innovations; Alfonso Cortés; José Coronel Urtecho; even the youngest poets, such as Carlos Martínez Rivas.

Of all the Central American countries, Nicaragua has expressed this spirit most clearly and unanimously, and in Nicaragua its characteristics are most admirably and faithfully summed up by Joaquín Pasos (1915-1947). Without ever losing contact with Spanish-language poetry, he gathered from French, German, English, and U.S. poetry whatever could serve him best. Even more—in some poems he experimented with new forms simultaneously being tried elsewhere. He captured his era not only by receptivity to influence but by divination.

Pasos first had to hear the immense, strange noises of the world, so his earliest works are travel poems, which show a remarkable sensitivity to places, landscapes, and atmosphere without his ever having left Nicaragua. They are "place-poems"—re-creations of a world whose mysterious pulse beats under his fingers. In *Cook*, he wrote:

<i>Allá en las aldeas lejanas</i>	There in the distant villages
<i>[escupidas detrás de las</i>	<i>[cast away behind the blue</i>
<i>] montañas azules</i>	<i>[mountains</i>
<i>o en las grandes ciudades insos-</i>	or in the great unsuspected
<i>] pechadas, puestas a secar</i>	<i>[cities, set out to dry in the</i>
<i>] al sol</i>	<i>[sun</i>
<i>donde otros hombres con-</i>	where other men would live
<i>] vivirían con nosotros y cono-</i>	<i>[together with us and we</i>
<i>] ceríamos sus almas de</i>	<i>[would know their</i>
<i>] otros moldes</i>	<i>[differently shaped souls</i>
<i>y ciertos golpes minúsculos</i>	and certain tiny movements
<i>] detrás de sus pupilas. . .</i>	<i>[behind their eyes. . .</i>

Anyone saying these things might be considered cosmopolitan and centrifugal. And so he was, but after wandering and absorbing freedom and breath, his imagination could return home and submerge itself in the earth without danger of constricting regionalisms or provincialisms.

The sureness with which Pasos unites novelty and tradition reached perfection in the short collection *Misterio Indio* (Indian Mystery). Using the most effective resources of world poetry, he not only sees deep into their world but sees our world through their eyes. Here

we find his blind Indians, opening paths in the air with their clumsy hands, and the old Indians before whom "the air stops moving":

<i>el viento pasa, contemplándolos,</i>	the wind passes, contemplating
<i>los toca con cuidado</i>	<i>[them,</i>
<i>para no desbaratarles sus</i>	<i>it touches them carefully</i>
<i>] corazones de ceniza.</i>	<i>so as not to destroy their</i>
	<i>[hearts of ashes.</i>

And the Indian fallen in the marketplace "taken bad," and the morbid interest of the shoeshine boys, but:

<i>al lavarle el estómago los</i>	in pumping his stomach the
<i>] médicos</i>	<i>[doctors</i>
<i>lo encontraron vacío, lleno de</i>	found it empty, full of hunger,
<i>] hambre,</i>	<i>of hunger and mystery.</i>

*de hambre y de misterio.*

And the lazy Indian who leaves his children the legacy of his "fondest yawn." And this:

<i>Nuestro viento furioso grita a</i>	Our furious wind shrieks
<i>] través de palmas gigantes,</i>	<i>[through giant palms,</i>
<i>sordos bramidos bajan del cielo</i>	dull roars come down from a sky
<i>] incendiado con lenguas de</i>	<i>[fiery with leopards' tongues,</i>
<i>] leopardos.</i>	

And in the tropical storm:

<i>Las indias jóvenes salen al</i>	The young Indian girls go out
<i>] patio, rompen sus camisas,</i>	<i>[to the patio, open their</i>
<i>ofrecen al viento sus senos des-</i>	<i>[blouses,</i>
<i>] nudos, que él se encarga de</i>	<i>offer their bare breasts to the</i>
<i>] afilar como volcanes.</i>	<i>[wind, so that he will sharpen</i>
	<i>[them like volcanoes.</i>

Thus, with no trace of archeology or picturesqueness, Pasos integrates into our time the strange message—a message not exactly of hope but of simple creative waiting—of a mysterious and ancient but living people.

This fusion of two kinds of time is the most dramatic part of the Central American contribution. "Modern" time, with its inventions, destructions, griefs, faiths, resounds in the slow, germinal, primitive time of America.

The American echo of the First World War was provided by Salomón de la Selva, another Nicaraguan, with his book of poems *El Soldado Desconocido* (The Unknown Soldier); of the Second World War, by Joaquín Pasos with his *Canto de Guerra de las Cosas* (War Song of Things).

<i>Los frutos no maduran en este</i>	The fruits in this sleeping air
<i>] aire dormido</i>	<i>[only ripen</i>
<i>sino lentamente, de tal suerte</i>	slowly, so that they seem
<i>] que parecen marchitos</i>	<i>[withered</i>
<i>y hasta los insectos se equivocan</i>	and even the insects are
<i>] en esta primavera sonám-</i>	<i>[confused in this sleepwalk-</i>
<i>] bula, sin sentido.</i>	<i>[ing, meaningless spring.</i>
<i>La naturaleza tiene ausente a su</i>	Nature's husband is away.
<i>] marido.</i>	The planted seeds haven't even
<i>No tienen ni fuerza suficiente</i>	<i>[the strength to die</i>
<i>] para morir las semillas del</i>	<i>and their death is heard like the</i>
<i>] cultivo</i>	<i>[thread of blood running</i>
<i>y su muerte se oye como el hilo</i>	<i>[from the mouth of a</i>
<i>] de sangre que sale de la</i>	<i>[wounded man.</i>
<i>] boca del hombre herido.</i>	

Of this long and great poem the Italian critic Oreste Macrí has said: "In Pasos' *Canto de Guerra*, the power of tropical nature perceived from the viewpoint of the dead, devouring itself and confusing the senses in a 'death-in-life,' is such that Eliot's *The Waste Land* seems in comparison like a pale bookish variation."

Thus did Joaquín Pasos perform the Mediterranean mission of Central American poetry. ♦ ♦ ♦

## points of view



### KISS ME NOT!

IN THE MOST recent issue of *Creación*, a literary magazine published in Guadalajara, Mexico, the editor, Ramón Rubin, presents a lively excerpt from his work *Burbujas en el Mar* (Bubbles in the Sea). Though his initial judgment of the French may seem rather harsh, he has an amusing approach to a time-honored French custom that has at some time, vicariously or otherwise, bothered most of us:

"To be brutally frank, I've never had a very high opinion of the French. True, the only one I've known intimately was Jean, that wonderful, rowdy mate that we took on in Santo Tomé, who never seemed at all like other Frenchmen. It's equally true that I've never had any logical reason for considering them so objectionable. But ever since that big lout in Marseilles kissed me on both cheeks, I've been even more strongly prejudiced. It's neither proper nor sensible for one man to kiss another as a sign of friendship.

"From books and movies I knew that such an abominable custom existed, but I had the impression that it went

on only in the upper social brackets. I never in this world thought it could happen among sailors and stevedores. But no. It was a fat, bearded dock worker—the *n*th degree of roughness, to all appearances—who so grossly insulted my masculinity.

"We had put into port with a shipment of rice from Seigon and discovered that the Marseilles longshoremen were on strike. I've always made it a practice to steer clear of situations of that kind . . . and didn't even bother to find out the reason for the difficulty. When the captain told us the consignee of the shipment was offering to pay an extra wage of ten dollars a day to any seaman who . . . would help some French soldiers unload the cargo, some of us were tempted. But *el Chileno*, who seemed well informed on certain matters, told us not to do it, since we would be 'scabs,' an ugly word at best. So we decided to sit by and see how the soldiers worked it out.

"The dispute promised to be entertaining, because in a French port—or an Italian one, for that matter—discussions and gestures give the impression that there might be an epidemic of in-

cipient insanity, hysteria, or, at least, maniacal melodrama. . . . On first encounter, you might expect bloodshed and violence. However, appearances are deceiving, and I've never seen things get really serious. I remember one time we had a set-to with the crew of an Italian tanker in Curaçao, and there was a great hullabaloo. We never reached an understanding, but they finally left us in peace and returned quietly to their ship.

"Those Marseilles stevedores were hot-headed enough, but, intimidated by soldier's rifles, . . . they confined themselves to . . . mumbling. It was curious to see the difficulties the soldiers were having. . . . They often feel superior. . . . but then can be almost as helpless as babies when it comes to performing some simple, everyday task. . . .

"It was also amusing to observe our boatswain's frustration at not being able to shout insults—as he usually did at us and even at the stevedores—at a sergeant who was operating the crane . . . and making a terrible mess of it. . . .

"Three times the heavy cover of the hatchway got away from another soldier working with the grappling irons. . . . When he finally succeeded in raising it . . . the hoist swerved in such a way that he dropped it over the side, instead of . . . on the deck. It's a good thing it was wooden, because if it had been of iron, as on modern ships, they would have had to hire a diver to retrieve it. They struggled an entire morning to do little more than open that hatchway. And, in the afternoon, when they tackled the job of actual unloading, they seemed very discouraged.

"They knocked the first load against the edge of the hatchway and . . . it crashed in pieces in the hold of the ship. I don't know why the devil they raised the second load almost up to the level of the bridge, but anyhow it fell apart up there. Some of the sacks landed on the deck, injuring one poor soldier; others landed on the dock, where the rice scattered all over, and three or four in the water. We nearly died laughing, and so did the longshoremen milling around below.

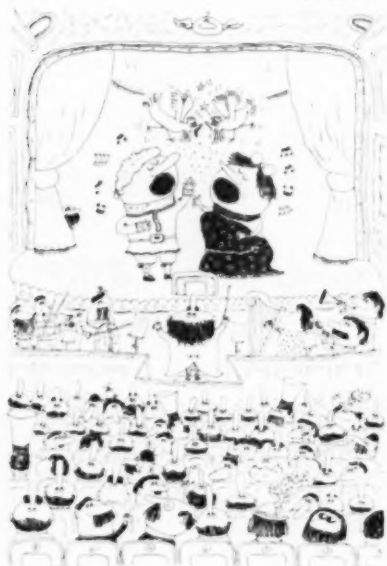
"The captain, who was nobody's fool, advised the consignee and the

French officer in charge of the work to find some experienced hands. But soldiers are rarely convinced except by armed strength, having the macabre notion that everything must be settled with brute force. And they stubbornly went on. . . . Fine.

"Since we were tied up at a railway dock, some freight cars had been

¡Qué artista!

por LANDRU



—Tienen tan mal carácter que les salen gallos de riña  
 "They're so bad they sound like a pair of fighting cocks."—Continente, Buenos Aires

brought up to facilitate matters. The third load got tangled up in the corners of an open car, and the bags burst open. . . .

"Then they decided to up the offer for our assistance to fifteen dollars a day. That was really hard to refuse, since we wouldn't even have had to work, just give directions. But *el Chileno* knew what he was doing and told them we wouldn't help even for five hundred dollars, that they'd better offer the stevedores an increase. . . . to see if they wouldn't come to terms and start working. It was sound advice. . . . I don't know why the consignee and the officer received it so gloomily and resentfully.

"Finally, they stopped unloading so that some strike-breaking longshoremen . . . could come to their assistance. And Pedro *el Caimito* and I went down. We had scarcely jumped from

the gangplank to the dock when some of the striking stevedores were practically on top of us. . . . We instinctively retreated, fearing violence. . . .

"On the contrary, they began hugging us with inexplicable enthusiasm. And the fattest and hairiest one of them all took advantage of my confusion and planted a noisy kiss on each cheek. . . . I was on the verge of punching the imbecile on the nose. I don't know whether it was respect for his heft or the apparent sincerity of . . . his friendliness that stopped me. For his part, that hulking man seemed not the least bit aware of the ridiculousness of his behavior and was slapping us both on the back. My friend Pedro carefully averted his face to keep from being kissed too. Meanwhile, all the stevedores surrounded us and chorused: 'Thanks! Thanks, pals!' Those Frenchmen didn't seem such bad guys after all.

"Taking the whole episode in our stride, we went with them to La Canebière, where they treated us to some pretty bad absinthe. I tried to get a little French blonde, who had sniffed the aroma of U.S. money. . . . to help me erase the unpleasant memory of those whiskered kisses on my cheeks.

"For a while that infamous osculation cost me a lot of teasing from my shipmates. . . . But I've come to the conclusion that, as *el Chileno* said, it was undoubtedly far better than having those Marseilles stevedores spit in my face for being a scab."

## EXCHANGE PROFESSOR IN THE U.S.A.

IN AN ARTICLE that appeared in *Nueva Era*, widely known educational magazine published in Quito, Dr. José Antonio Baquero de la Calle, President of the Ecuadorean Chamber of Deputies, briefly describes his experience teaching in the United States under the exchange program sponsored by the State Department:

"In January 1952, I applied through the Embassy in Quito and . . . after some correspondence was informed that the University of Florida in Gainesville needed a professor of Latin American economics to fill a temporary vacancy. . . . I was offered the position for one semester, with an

optional second term, in one of the most important universities in the southern part of the United States. Naturally, I gratefully accepted . . . and in September left to take over the professorship.

"I had spent several years in the United States and was fairly well acquainted with the temperament of the people. I had been a student at the University of Southern California, in Los Angeles, where I received my master's degree in international law and economics in 1941, so I knew something about university life. And I had ample teaching experience at the Catholic University of Ecuador. Even so, the fact that my first class was to be given in English seemed an almost insurmountable obstacle, since I had been away from the language for quite a while. But I had no difficulty in making myself understood, and the students seemed not at all uncomfortable at having a Latin American professor with a strong foreign accent. That first experience completely dissipated my anxiety, and from then on I was not bothered by what I had originally considered a stumbling block. Moreover, the courtesy and friendliness of the administrative authorities and the other professors, as well as the serious interest demonstrated by the students—all intensely eager to learn from a Latin American who could tell them something new about the economics and finances of his own country and others like it—made me feel a regular member of the faculty, with no distinction whatever, except perhaps for the special hospitality shown my family and me.

"Settled in my office, with easy access to the library with its remarkable collection of books—ancient and modern, U.S. and foreign—I devoted myself entirely to preparing my courses and to the students, who freely sought additional information outside of class. This concentration partially explains the success achieved by U.S. institutions, for it allows each professor to achieve complete mastery of his field . . . and provides an opportunity for teachers and students to know each other better on more informal terms. . . . This most rewarding experience . . . is without doubt the finest recol-



lection I have of my months at the University of Florida.

"Since my contract was renewed at the end of the first semester, I was able to gain further insight. . . . The U.S. university is not regarded only as a sacred shrine of learning, but also as a center for preparing students to contribute to the nation's progress. On receiving his degree, a professionally trained person in the United States is in a position to begin work at once in his specialized field, and often months in advance he has a contract in his pocket that will enable him to put his training to use immediately upon graduation. The U.S. university in no way neglects philosophy, literature, or art, and those who follow these courses, though the percentage is small, do not find their education wasted in a practical sense, for their society makes good use of theologians and legislators as well as of engineers and agronomists.

"In my opinion, another important

characteristic of U.S. universities is the administrative continuity . . . that allows program planning with an eye to the future. For example, the University of Florida has a Department of Inter-American Studies, headed by the eminent U.S. historian Dr. A. Curtis Wilgus, specialist in Latin American affairs with more than thirty years' experience. Under his wise administration this department, which began small just a few years ago, is constantly growing in prestige with the help of annual Caribbean Conferences, where problems of the whole Caribbean area are discussed. . . . As time goes by, these are instilling a sense of economic, social, and international solidarity in that region. The Department is also encouraging student exchange with Latin American countries and up to now has enrolled more than 150 boys and girls from almost all the countries of the Hemisphere. It has also undertaken to broaden the teacher-exchange program. . . . This progress toward cultural understanding . . . is so systematic and scientific that if the university keeps up the pace set by Dr. Wilgus and his Department of Inter-American Studies, it will soon be the most important center for research into the problem of relations between Latin America and the United States.

"Since there is no firmer foundation for good will and friendship than mutual understanding, this university enterprise makes a significant contribution—perhaps wider in scope than formal diplomatic relations—to continental solidarity, so imperative in these times."

### THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE . . .

IN HER WEEKLY column in *Manchete*, illustrated magazine published in Rio de Janeiro, Elsie Lessa recounts a love story that is appealing because of its very simplicity:

"They must bring that man home! I can't live without him."

"Relatives and friends got together and explained very logically that it was only a question of a few days, that he was in the hospital, that he couldn't be moved, that he had to have daily X-rays, and that he couldn't possibly come home yet. But does a woman in love listen to reason?"

"I can't! I simply can't live without him! My world is empty! Time stands still! Can't you just imagine the good time he must be having with those nurses?"

"It was useless to say no. But would a man who had been hit by a car, whose leg was now in a cast, be thinking about good times and flirting with the nurses?"

"You don't know my 'Boy.' He may be in a cast, but he can still use his eyes for looking and his mouth for talking and carrying on with those nurses."

"It was an obsession. Because of her overwrought state, she was forbidden by the doctor to leave the house, and her husband—her pride and joy—was in the hospital. . . . It was fast becoming a household tragedy. She refused to eat, spent the whole day by the telephone, inquired about the injured foot. . . . and, with great anxiety, persisted in finding out about the nurses. After spending a week *à la* Sherlock Holmes, she discovered that the night nurse (it had to be the night nurse!) was a blonde divorcee. . . .

"She was desperate. Didn't she remember that before they were married her 'Boy' had gone with a freckle-faced blonde? She issued an ultimatum to the family. Either that man came home, even with his leg in a cast, or she was going to the hospital.

"They decided to bring the 'Boy' home. For two weeks he had been the pet of the hospital. He had made friends not only with his own nurses—the blonde and the other one—but also with those from other floors who stopped by his room when off duty. He told stories, crowed like a rooster, cried like a newborn baby, and promised wonderful evenings of entertainment at the next Carnival—with the two nurses, the blonde and the brunette. His happy laughter filled the usually silent corridor.

"Though parting was sad, he agreed that it was better for him to go home. He really adored his wife. Even more than the Carnival dances, more than those nurses. And he shouldn't go against her wishes. . . . After all, . . . this was no time to jeopardize their marital bliss. Because he would be ninety-three in June, and their diamond wedding anniversary wasn't too far away."



A Girl in Every Port. Mundo Uruguayo, Montevideo



# books

## AN ENGLISHMAN IN SPAIN

SPAIN, whose own writers have been so little given to studying other peoples, has stimulated the interest of foreign writers from at least as far back as Pompeius Trogus, the fifth-century Gallic-Roman historian, down to writers of our own day. Among its most recent interpreters is V. S. Pritchett, the distinguished English literary critic and novelist, who spent much time in Spain off and on between 1924 and 1935, returning in 1951 and again in 1952.

*The Spanish Temper* is an analytical study of the Spanish people. It is perceptive and personal and sometimes biased. The author's particular way of looking at things makes him overdramatize the people, the landscape, the ways of life. As is perhaps inevitable with any foreigner, however perceptive and well-informed, here and there the heart of the matter eludes Mr. Pritchett; at such times he is apt to describe the undefinable as "the continual paradox of Spanish life," "eternal Spain," and the like. Occasionally it seems difficult for him to understand, or rather, to appreciate, historical figures like Philip II, but then Mr. Pritchett is an Englishman, and it must be as hard for an Englishman to appreciate Philip as for a Spaniard to evaluate Good Queen Bess.

As one might expect, the book is full of literary allusions. Illuminating comparisons which clarify many observations also abound. "The life of Spanish cities," for example, "runs much closer to what life was like in England in the seventeenth century; indeed, if one wants to imagine the habits of London life in the time of Defoe, one cannot do better than study Madrid or Seville."

It is never easy to interpret an entire people; the danger of generalization and half-truth is always present. Mr. Pritchett does not escape this danger. He, too, as he points out in his preface, deals in generalities ("Shyness is incomprehensible to anyone born in Spain"), which he often backs up with quotations from other

writers, many of them Spanish. Mr. Pritchett, as a matter of fact, knows his Spanish literature well and quotes freely from it, especially from the works of the self-analytical "generation of '98," the group of writers—among them Gánivet, Unamuno, Ortega y Gasset, Baroja, and Azorín—who in the year of the war with the United States set out to assess the Spanish character and to discover the reasons behind the breakdown of the first great modern empire.

According to Mr. Pritchett, there is no such country as Spain; there are simply eight or ten regions and climates and several languages in a peninsula that is a piece of rocky geography. Even today, when barriers have been broken down and the population mixed up by war, the Spanish people are rooted in their own region. They are Basques, Catalans, Galicians, Castilians, Andalusians, Valencians, and so on, first and Spaniards afterward. Spain is the least European country in Europe. It belongs to the Africa of the Moorish kings more than to Europe, which it has rejected. "Africa," he quotes, "begins at the Pyrenees."

Some of the most rewarding parts of the book, at least for those who have not been in Spain in recent years, deal with the changes Mr. Pritchett found during his last two trips. One of the purposes of those trips was to discover the changes that had taken place since 1935. He reports that the faces of Spanish cities have been changed by indulgence in pretentious architecture; that the population has increased enormously; that the peasants have left the land in tens of thousands to go into the cities, swarming into the new slums; that wages are lower and food dearer; that there are many new-rich people; and that, along with *el sereno*, that uniquely Spanish night watchman, old ways are disappearing.

The people, however, are unchanged. Pride, individualism, courtesy, personal dignity, anarchism, remain. Values are the same. The Spanish sense of equalitarianism ("the only real equality I have met in the world . . . based on the sense of the absolute quality of the person") has not disappeared.

"I am not an art critic," Mr. Pritchett tells us, "but since I live chiefly by the eye, I get more pleasure out of painting and sculpture than any other arts. I have a purely literary point of view: that is to say, when I see a picture I find myself turning it into writing about human nature, habits of mind, the delights of the senses—all that is meant to me by 'the pride of life.'" This quality has made it possible for him to give us skillful and interpretative, as well as dramatic, descriptions of the Spanish land, particularly of the austere beautiful landscape of Castile, and to convey much of the quality of Spain. It is surprising, however, that this book by a man who lives "chiefly by the eye" should contain no photographs and only a pretty but inadequate map.

Perhaps because of his long absence from Spain, Mr. Pritchett sets down one bit of misinformation: Miguel de Unamuno, the writer, philosopher, and rector of the University of Salamanca, one of Europe's oldest seats of learning, did not die insane. Nor did he give his support to the insurgents, as has sometimes been erroneously reported. His indignant words to the battle-scarred General Millán Astray—"A divided Spain would be exactly like you, General, one-eyed and one-armed!"—are still remembered, as is his famous remark to the rebellious army officers, "*Venceréis, pero no convenceréis*" ("You will conquer, but you will not vanquish").

This is a dramatic book in which generalities about the Spanish temper are mingled with provocative observations on art, religion, Spanish thought, history, politics, literature, Spanish speech, manners and morals, dress, dancing, music, bullfights, gypsies, and other elements of the Spanish picture. If it is biased at times, it is nevertheless a good introduction to Spain and its people. Anyhow, why shouldn't an observer have his biases, particularly if he is as interesting as Mr. Pritchett?—*Josefina de Román*

THE SPANISH TEMPER by V. S. Pritchett. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1954. 270 p. \$3.75

## CHILEANS AND THEIR LAND

IN *Ni por Mar ni por Tierra* (Neither by Sea nor by Land), Miguel Serrano, a paradoxical, argumentative figure, has published one of the most curious and intimate works to appear on the Chilean scene in recent years. The title is a phrase from one of Pindar's lyrics. Though subtitled "History of a Generation," it is an exuberant and dramatic autobiography.

The average reader may be somewhat confused by this energetic anthology of a temperament, this "case history" of confessional ecstasy. But it seems to me that in its very divergence from all that has been—or will be—published lies its appeal. It may also seem to many that its philosophy is completely unjustified, personalized, and without any connection with what others—Toynbee, Sartre, Marcel, and the rest—have been doing in the fields of history and psychology, but there are extraordinary observations and sharp perceptions of the sort Santayana defines as "the burst of truth from a man." Especially notable is the indisputable force of a search

for South American values so sincere and a literary talent so vibrant that they overcome the hesitant objections of the "critic" armed with dictionary, microscope, and scalpel.

At thirty-five, Miguel Serrano is an essayist, a short story writer, a politician, a diplomat, a traveler, and, fundamentally, an observer of his era and his country. He presents an interpretative essay on Chile in 398 pages of memories, confessions, monologues, stories, parables (even fables), journeys, and social, political, ethnic, geological, metaphysical, and magical scrutiny of Chile's present and future. It is an "opera omnia" on his generation and its struggles, a "summa theologica" on the countryside, which the author regards as the vital and demoniacal core of Chilean life.

Judging from the general tenor of the book and the author's conclusions, the subtitle might more appropriately have been "On the Tragic Sentiment of Chile." For he propounds and demonstrates the magical dominance of the landscape over man—begun in the legendary mystery of the Indians; perpetuated in what Serrano calls the "sin" of the Spanish conquest; corrupted by the imported rationalism and scientism of the nineteenth century (which imposed on "a strange land an even stranger culture and spirit"); and paralyzed by the violent emotions of politicians, pedagogues, and leaders who are uprooted from the land, who have outwardly subjugated it and have created the abyss between existence and essence, between daily life and the forces of the earth, between man and the countryside.

In speaking of his adolescence, he describes the drama of his island-like generation, "great and fearful," disjointed and invertebrate, anxious to discover the profound secret of their native land and to create a real new world, but driven to "solitude and horror," a generation of "saints, madmen, and suicides." These are chapters of anecdotes, dreams, conversations, inner conflicts, confrontments, and evasions.

Addicted to myths, magic, and native witchcraft, in his desire to penetrate the legendary roots of the land, he plunges lyrically into Chile's future. He imagines the man of tomorrow, bound to the countryside, identified with his inherent destiny, a race of "titans, emerging again into the open spaces from the breast of the white mountains to continue their unfinished history: the life of man triumphing over the land." The eager adventure of ideas surging from these pages lights the whole book with a fire that is no less burning for being illusory, no narrower in scope or less liberal for being personal.

The style—always passionate, belligerent, and lively—displays incredible skill, especially in the heat of argument and the description of Chilean nature. I believe that, in dealing with such a singular work, I could not do better than illustrate what I mean with a few typical passages:

"Here is a new narcissistic interpretation of love of one's country. The land is a mirror endlessly reflecting our countenances. From looking at ourselves in it so often, from loving it so much, the country or ourselves are transformed into a flower."



"One night I lost the God of my childhood. That pupil talked to me about Darwin. That night I lost God and I wept slowly."

"The spirit also 'believes' as does the soul, and definitely knows of the vast spaces and immortality. But in Chile the spirit has not been born yet."

"Wood lives within the forest. Wood also is Chile's landscape. Sometimes it has a name: beech, hazelnut, fir, cypress, larch, oak. It grows under the rain. Its life is within, like a dry timber current, but a tiny juicy sun goes with it."

"Generally, the land is roads; down here in Chile, it is an end. Nothing begins, nothing continues. Here everything ends, life ends. It is the continent of the end rather than of the beginning. Of the end of physical life. On the other hand, there is infinite light on the mountains, a clear signal in the air, that creates the desire for sublime destiny, boundless faith. For that reason the Chilean landscape is finalistic and religious."

*Ni por Mar ni por Tierra* could be analyzed in various ways, including a study of the author's personality, so directly and forcefully expressed through his book. But I believe that for now—and perhaps for always—the most worthwhile thing in these pages is the conscience of a man, his struggle, his sincerity, his feeling of essential liberty, his search for authentic values for this our unknown, sealed-off land.—*Santiago del Campo*

NI POR MAR NI POR TIERRA, by Miguel Serrano. Santiago, Chile, Editorial Nascimento, 1954. 398 p.

## ART BEFORE THE SPANIARDS

RENÉ d'HARNONCOURT, director of the Museum of Modern Art, describes *Ancient Arts of the Andes* as "an abstract of [Wendell C. Bennett's] life-work on Andean research." Thus this lavish volume, prepared for the recent exhibition at the Museum (see *AMERICAS*, July 1954) may in a sense serve as a memorial to the distinguished Americanist and chairman of the Yale anthropology department, who died in the summer of 1953. Dr. Bennett discusses in turn the five major regions that may be grouped under the term "Andean civilization," devoting most of the book, naturally, to the work of the complex and highly advanced cultures of the central Andes—from Chavín de Huántar, a thousand years before the Christian era, down to the Inca Empire. While relatively little is known about

some of these cultures, still less is known about those of the northern Andes, the areas of Central America where Andean influence predominates over Mexican, the Amazon basin, and the southern Andes. But Dr. Bennett outlines the available material skillfully, sketching in a background of daily life in these societies wherever possible and describing the various artistic trends clearly and simply. More than two hundred well-chosen photographs reinforce the text and make the volume a handsome picture book as well as a short course in Andean archeology.—*B. M. W.*

ANCIENT ARTS OF THE ANDES, by Wendell C. Bennett, with introduction by René d'Harnoncourt. New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1954. 187 p. Illus. \$6.50

## THE SARDONIC BRAZILIANS

(Continued from page 19)

The mouth is choked with life.  
Life drips from the mouth,  
Life sticks to the hands, to the pavement.  
Life is fat, oily, mortal, surreptitious.

The poet awaits the hour of death, and he only hopes it will not be "vile, besmirched with fear, submission, or calculation." He bids himself farewell, saying:

adeus, composição  
Que um dia se chamou Carlos Drummond de Andrade.  
Adeus, minha presença, meu olhar, minha sombra no muro,  
Sinal meu no rosto, olhos miopes, objetos de uso pessoal,  
Ideia de justiça, revolta e sono, adeus,  
Adeus, vida aos outros legada.

farewell, composition  
That once was called Carlos Drummond de Andrade.  
Farewell, my presence, my vision, my shadow on the wall,  
Scar on my face, myopic eyes, objects of personal use,  
Idea of justice, rebellion, and sleep, farewell,  
Farewell, life, to others bequeathed.

Among the Brazilian poets there are those I call "leap-year poets"—those in whose lives a poem occurs as the twenty-ninth of February does in the calendar year, that is, poets who enter the state of grace only once in a while. One, Pedro Nava, a physician by profession, is the author of a poem that is perhaps the most sinister in all the Portuguese language. An ironic chill runs through it from beginning to end. This poem expresses the poet's last wishes for his dead body, and is entitled *O Defunto* (The Deceased). And what does he want? *Death in bad taste!*

Dêem-me coroas de pano.  
Dêem-me as flores de roxo pano,  
Angustiosas flores de pano,  
Enormes coroas maciças,  
Como enormes salva-vidas,  
Com fitas negras pendentes. . .

Give me wreaths of cloth.  
Give me those purple cloth  
flowers,  
Anguished cloth flowers,  
Enormous, massive wreaths,  
Like giant lifesavers,  
With black ribbons hanging  
[from them. . .

Eu quero a morte nua e crua  
Terrífica e habitual,  
Com o seu velório habitual.  
Ah! o seu velório habitual!

I want death naked and crude  
Terrifying and customary,  
With its customary wake  
Oh! its customary wake!

Não me envolvam num lençol:  
A franciscana humildade  
Bem sabeis que não se casa

Do not wrap me in a shroud:  
You know very well that  
Franciscan humility



Gold pectoral or head ornament from Esmeraldas, Ecuador, in University Museum, Philadelphia.  
Illustration from *Ancient Arts of the Andes*



Com meu amor pela Carne,  
Com meu apêgo ao Mundo.

E quero ir de casimira:  
De jaquetão com debrum,  
Calça listrada, plastron . . .  
E os mais altos colarinhos.  
Dêem-me um terno de ministro  
Ou roupa nova de noivo . . .  
E assim solene e sinistro,  
Quero ser um tal defunto,  
Um morto tão acabado,  
Tão afligido e pungente,  
Que sua lembrança envenene  
O que restar aos amigos  
De vida sem minha vida. . .  
Meus amigos, tenham pena  
Senão do morto, ao menos  
Dos dois sapatos do morto!  
Dos seus incriveis, patéticos  
Sapatos pretos de verniz.  
Olhem bem êstes sapatos  
E olhai os vossos também.

Does not go with my love for  
[the Flesh,  
My attachment to the World.  
And I want to go in cassimere:  
In a dress coat trimmed with  
[black braid,  
Striped trousers, false shirt  
[front . . .  
And the highest possible collar.  
Give me a cabinet minister's  
[suit,  
Or a bridegroom's new  
[clothes . . .  
And thus, solemn and sinister,  
I want to be such a corpse,  
Such a perfect dead man,  
So tormented and pungent,  
That the memory of it will  
[poison,  
For my friends, all that remains  
[to them  
Of life without me. . .  
My friends, have pity  
If not on the deceased, at least  
On the two shoes of the  
[deceased!  
On his two incredible, pathetic,  
Black patent-leather shoes.  
Look well at these shoes  
And look at your own also.

In the generation of 1930 and later writers, irony began to die out. The new poets criticize the old for their taunting verses and, like intent hens, lay their poems in all seriousness, "like one who is reassuming the old honesty," to quote a line from the critic Rubem Braga (another good leap-year poet). In this poem he jokes about his drinking companions, who go into spiritual retreat at the Benedictine convent during Holy Week, and after Easter return to the familiar bar "in a hangover of virtue that makes them a little pale." The bittersweet taste for irony still shows up in the works of Braga and Vinicius de Moraes. For example, here is Vinicius telling of his "delicacy."

Mato com delicadeza. Faço chorar delicadamente  
E me deleito. Inventei o carinho dos pés: minha palma  
De menino de ilha poussa com delicadeza sobre um corpo de  
[adúltera.  
Na verdade sou um homem de muitas mulheres, e com tôdas  
[delicado e atento.  
Se me entediam, abandono-as delicadamente,  
[desprendendo-me delas com uma doçura de água.  
Se as quero, sou delicadíssimo; tudo em mim  
Desprende esse fluido que as envolve de maneira  
[irremissível.  
Sou um meigo energúmeno. Até hoje só bati numa mulher,  
Mas com singular delicadeza. Não sou bom  
Nem mau: sou delicado. Preciso ser delicado  
Porque dentro de mim mora um ser feroz e fratricida  
Como um lobo. Se não fôsse delicado  
Já não seria mais. Ninguém me injúria  
Porque sou delicado; também não conheço o dom da injúria.  
Meu comércio com os homens é leal e delicado: prezo  
[ao absurdo  
A liberdade alheia; não existe  
Ser mais delicado que eu: sou um místico da delicadeza;  
Sou um mártir da delicadeza; sou  
Um monstro de delicadeza.

I kill with delicacy. I make people cry delicately  
And enjoy myself. I invented the caress of the feet;

With delicacy I placed my island boy's palm on an  
[adulteress' body.  
The truth is, I am a man of many women, and delicate and  
[attentive with them all.  
If they bore me, I abandon them delicately, unfastening  
[myself from them with the gentleness of water.  
If I love them, I am extremely delicate; everything in me  
[exudes a fluid that surrounds them irremissibly.  
I am demoniacally gentle. Up to now I have only struck  
[one woman,  
And that with extraordinary delicacy. I am neither good  
Nor bad: I am delicate. I have to be delicate  
Because within me there dwells a being as fierce and  
[fratricidal  
As a wolf. If I were not delicate  
I would not have lived this long. No one insults me  
Because I am delicate; nor do I have the gift of insult.  
My traffic with men is loyal and delicate: I prize  
The freedom of others to the point of absurdity;  
A more delicate being than I does not exist; I am a mystic  
[of delicacy;  
I am a martyr of delicacy; I am  
A monster of delicacy.

Naturally, this "monster of delicacy" could not help speaking of his country with the greatest delicacy. He does it in his poem *Pátria Minha*:

Vontade de beijar os olhos de minha pátria,  
De niná-la, de passar-lhe a mão pelos cabelos . . .  
Vontade de mudar as cores do vestido (auriverde!) tão feias  
De minha pátria, de minha pátria sem sapatos  
E sem meias, pátria minha  
Tão pobrinha!

Não te direi o nome, pátria minha.  
Teu nome é pátria amada, é pátriazinha.  
Não rima com mãe gentil.  
Vives em mim como uma filha, que és  
Uma ilha de ternura; a Ilha  
Brasil, talvez.

Agora chamarei a cotovia  
E pedirei que peça ao rouxinol do dia  
Que peça ao sabiá  
Para levar-te presto este avigrama:  
"Pátria minha, saudades de quem te ama . . .  
Vinicius de Moraes."

I would like to kiss the eyes of my native land,  
To lull it to sleep, to run my hand through its hair . . .  
I would like to change the ugly colors (gold and green!)  
[of my country's dress,  
My barefoot and stockingless country,  
My poor little country!

I will not say your name, O native land.  
Your name is beloved fatherland, dear, sweet country.  
It does not rhyme with gentle mother.  
You live within me like a daughter, because you are  
An island of tenderness: the Island  
Of Brazil, perhaps.

Now I will call the crested lark  
And ask him to ask the nightingale of the day  
To ask the sabiá  
To carry you quickly this avigrama:  
"My native land, regards from one who loves you,  
Vinicius de Moraes."

I must point out that "*mãe gentil*" ("gentle mother") and "*pátria amada*" are expressions from our National Anthem.

We could find touches of irony in many other poets, but those I have quoted represent the ironic attitude in modern Brazilian poetry with the most originality. ♦ ♦ ♦

*Presenting*  
*our new*  
**SECRETARY**  
**GENERAL**



**Dr. Carlos Dávila**, new Secretary General of the OAS, has been President of his native Chile, founded and directed two of Santiago's leading periodicals, and has held several posts in the United Nations. In addition, he is known throughout this Hemisphere as an author, lecturer, and professor. He knows the United States well, having served here both as his country's Ambassador and as a working journalist. He was a track champion until the age of twenty-two, when he turned to more serious pursuits.



**On hand** to greet Dr. Dávila and his family at the National Airport, after his election by the OAS Council, were Ambassador Merwin L. Bohan, U.S. Representative on the Inter-American Economic and Social Council (left), retiring Secretary General Alberto Lleras, and Assistant Secretary General William Manger.



**U.S.-born Mrs. Dávila** and the Secretary General get acquainted with their new official residence and the Pan American Union's striking Aztec garden. Mrs. Dávila, the former Frances Adams Moore, an accomplished writer, architect, and interior decorator, has been an AMERICAS contributor.



**Adeline**, seventeen, Mrs. Dávila's daughter, joins the family on the steps of their new home. Adeline spent a year studying in Colombia, where she learned to speak Spanish fluently, and hopes to study law. Dr. Dávila's daughters, Luz and Paz, are both married and living elsewhere.

## FROM SWEATSHOPS TO SALONS

(Continued from page 23)

Now he would like to set up others in Latin America, possibly in Mexico or Brazil. His dress designers work in a studio on Broadway, each earning about \$125 a week. They are given samples of the fabrics the textile manufacturers offer and work out the styles from there. Alongside the cells where these girls work are the enormous storage lofts and packing rooms hung with row on row of fluffy dresses. From here Joseph Love took us to his model factory in Harlem. Mayor Robert F. Wagner of New York attended the dedication of this plant early this year. I marvelled at the perfection of the machines, which did in a few minutes work that used to take hours. After inspecting the cutting room, we went on to another, where the noisy hum of sewing machines almost drowned out speech. Suddenly Love said to me, "Here you can speak Spanish with our shop chief. She is Puerto Rican."

I approached Lidia Vivaldi. When I asked whether it was true that there were many Latin American women in the industry, she answered with a smile, "Look, in this room alone there are seventy operators, and only three are from the United States. There are Colombians, Panamanians, Costa Ricans. In fact, I believe all the Latin American countries are represented here." I understood then why some of the ILGWU pamphlets are published in Spanish, and why the organization maintains a special course in English for Latin Americans.

Lidia Vivaldi showed me how the work is synchronized so that each operator has one task to perform, then passes the garment on to the next worker, who advances the process another step before she shoots it on to her neighbor. Altogether, the factory employs five hundred workers.

As we left, Mildred Kaldor explained, "You've seen how a girl from one to fourteen can dress. Now let's see who prepares the styles for the older girls."

Our next call was at Pat Hartley's elegant salon. A fashion show for representatives of the press had just ended, and the models were still wandering through the corridors in the latest creations of Luis Estévez, a Cuban who until recently designed for Patou in Paris. Estévez is twenty-four, and married to a North American girl; his creative imagination is quoted at ten thousand dollars a year. Tall and slender, wearing close-fitting trousers, he was volubly pleased with the afternoon's success. Mildred asked him how the show came off.

"Not a single flop. Everything went magnificently. You know, Mildred, it's easy to judge the general im-



President Franklin D. Roosevelt and members of the cast of *Pins and Needles*, hit revue written, produced, and acted by ILGWU members in 1937-38

pression. . . . Come here." He called to a model going by. "Look at this. Do you like it? It's one of the numbers that caused the biggest sensation. And there's something else—very important. Lord and Taylor has given me one of their windows. You know what that means."

Mildred congratulated him jubilantly. Luis Estévez' triumph was partly hers, for it was she who discovered him in Paris and persuaded him to come to the U.S.A.

We left Pat Hartley's and headed for Dorothy Hubb's, the firm that dresses Lucille Ball, star of *I Love Lucy*. Phil Donn, one of the owners, showed me through the shop where the styles are worked out until they are perfect in every line. Then the patterns are cut in paper and sent in large rolls to the factory in Pennsylvania. Dorothy Hubb employs eight hundred workers and, besides supplying big stores all over the United States, exports dresses priced between ten and twenty-five dollars wholesale to Venezuela, Cuba, and Mexico.

Up to this point I had seen only mass production at work so I asked Mildred Kaldor about houses that make exclusive originals. She looked at me in surprise and protested, "But aren't you tired?"

On the contrary, I felt stimulated by the spectacle of

David Dubinsky (right), union president since 1932, holds press conference. Highly regarded by workers and manufacturers alike, he has made ILGWU a model union offering many and varied benefits



Peace in the garment industry is symbolized by union label, sewn in all women's and children's clothing made under ILGWU contract

a business directed toward the creation of beauty that, while perhaps ephemeral and fleeting, by the same token must always be re-created by new formulas in order to continue.

Over a cup of tea, Mildred Kaldor told me about still other aspects of an industry that probably requires a greater variety of specialists than any other. So the conversation turned to the schools for professional models. "The first, established in 1938, was John Robert Powers". Later there were others, but that's the oldest," Mildred explained. "It's not easy to get in. Just as you need a high-school diploma to qualify for college, Powers demands certain basic qualities in his students. If they don't have them, he doesn't encourage girls to take his courses. Among other things he teaches them to walk with confidence, to move gracefully, even to speak in a pleasant tone of voice and with correct diction. His courses are so effective that several graduates—like Maggie McNamara and Anita Colby—later distinguished themselves in the movies and in the theater."

The next day I entered a world very different from that of mass production. Samuel Winston received me in a small, somber salon. His indifference was Olympian, and I felt myself slipping off it like fingers fruitlessly trying to pinch glass. Winston gave me the monosyllabic treatment, the worst possible from a reporter's standpoint. I decided to change tactics and tell him quite truthfully how much I admired what I had seen the day before. This was the key. Samuel Winston frowned.

"That's what they showed you?"

"Yes, it's marvelous, really wonderful. . . ."

"Of course, anyone marvels at mass production, at quantity. But we don't go in for that here."

"What then?"

"Come here." Samuel Winston led me to a small adjoining room. He took a dress from a rack. It was perfectly simple, black touched with white.

"Look at it a bit. Notice the cut. See this skirt and the blouse. Everything is on the bias. That's the secret of the best needlework."

"Do you take your inspiration from Dior?"

"Madam, Dior draws inspiration from my models. Wait a moment. I want to show you something."

In a few minutes Winston reappeared, carrying the languid form of a dress across his arms. Two apparently irreconcilable shades were blended in perfect harmony: very pale lilac and neutral orange.

"This is by our designer Charles James. . . . You haven't heard of Charles James?" Samuel Winston choked in horror. I pretended complete ignorance, since this had such a stimulating effect on Samuel Winston's conversation.

"You asked me if we follow Dior. But Dior plagiarizes James! James is a genius. There's no one like him for discovering the sixteenth of an inch too little or too much in a shoulder, or in the length of a dress. No one knows the mystery of colors the way he does, or how the different fabrics adapt themselves to forms. . . ."

"Naturally he uses synthetic fabrics—"

Samuel Winston shuddered. His reply came in glacial

*Smart clothes at moderate cost. A lounging ensemble, . . .*



*. . . a trim navy-blue spring suit trimmed with white and red, . . .*

*. . . a cotton print for resort wear, . . .*



*. . . a floating short evening dress, . . .*



*. . . identical costumes for mother and daughters*



tones: "We use only French wools, Italian silks, Egyptian linen. Others can have the synthetic products."

Later, pitying my ignorance, perhaps moved by my sincere admiration, he arranged an interview with Charles James.

The *enfant terrible* of fashion received me in his Fifth Avenue apartment. While his secretary was announcing me, I took a look around. In a bookcase I saw works by Mary Baker Eddy, Willa Cather, Eudora Welty, and Fielding. The open record player revealed the last number played—Fauré's *Requiem*. There was perhaps too much furniture in the hall, but some porcelain figures bore witness to their owner's good taste. In the middle of the room a dummy displayed an unfinished creation: a black evening gown. I went over to examine it. The bodice was simply fitted, but the skirt, gathered behind in a swirl around the hips, fell in large, rigid waves. I bent over and lifted the skirt to see what crinoline mechanism held it that way, and discovered a detail that revealed the artist's zeal: beneath the pella underskirt that supported the outer skirt, a narrower petticoat surrounded the figure, isolating it from the dress as if to prevent the person wearing it from altering, with her own body, the lines James had sculptured in cloth and color. When I released the skirt, it fell back into place with perfect precision. I imagined it would withstand a hurricane, and realized then that Charles James applies an architectural feeling in his work. Later he told me how he "constructs" a dress, without sketching it, modeling it over the body, supporting the forms his fantasy suggests with wire structures or large whalebone frames. Time means nothing to him, and he may spend two or three months or longer if necessary, creating a model.

Charles James carries his forty-seven years with extraordinary youthfulness, and his liveliness is mental as well as physical. He is restless, impulsive, arrogant, although he always has a ready smile to soften the bold declarations that have made him both feared and admired for their undeniable originality and unvarnished truth. Only he can dare to say, confident that no one will contradict him because of the authority his achievements give him, such things as:

"Do I draw inspiration from the history of fashion? Madam. I make history."

"There are no colors in America any more. Here all you find is Christmas red, and Walt Disney's colors represent the whole scale of American shades."

"I don't dress the Duchess of Windsor because she doesn't pay my prices, and I can't afford the luxury of selling her my dresses at half price." (A Charles James original costs from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars.)

"I don't work on a commercial basis but more for the love of creating and experimenting. Fashion industrialists don't understand the concept of architecture in production."

"Economic success in the fashion industry, unfortunately for me, goes to the man who makes the best use of ideas, not to the one who thought them up."

"In America they let creative talent die of hunger."

"When I am creating, I reach the limits of exhaustion and fatigue."

"I know that I can make something beautiful out of anything."

This last assertion he confirmed in a job that took him outside his own field: the interior decoration of his house in Texas, designed by Philip Johnson in modern style, using glass and brick.

Charles James is not only a creative artist, he is also an intellectual with fine sensitivity to music. He asserts: "There are no leaders of the intellectual movement in America like Sartre, for example, in France. There is an undeveloped potential here. In Santa Fe, New Mexico, a colony of poets is being organized that may have repercussions. We live in a gilded communism. Ideas are accepted ready-made, and the freedom of thought is lost by not being practiced. We have not managed to regain the intellectual level attained in the eighteenth century."

While his ideas profoundly shock some circles, Charles James enjoys genuine veneration in others. A visit of his to Paris causes the commotion in the *haut monde* of an appearance in their respective spheres of Matisse or Frank Lloyd Wright. Schiaparelli, Dior, and Fath hasten to lend him their favorite models for showing his creations, and his fashion shows are staged with all the care of a theater performance. The selection of music by composers like Samuel Barber or Scriabine to create an appropriate atmosphere plays an important part.

But Charles James' character permits the most unexpected outbursts. One of his permanent complaints is of the lack of honesty of certain merchants who take advantage of his ideas to enrich themselves without giving him the proper credit. On one occasion, a famous New York furrier who had bought a design from him, promising to put the artist's name alongside the firm's on the label, neglected this detail. Charles James took the trouble to round up two dozen live clothes moths, put them in a box, and went personally to release them in the salon of his horrified partner.

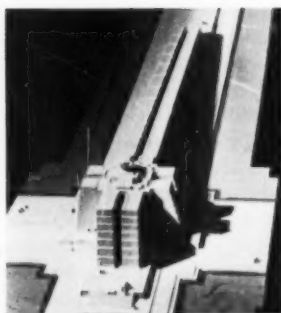
A few years ago Charles James gave proof of the permanence that is essential to every artistic creation when he presented a collection of dresses made since 1933. The critics had to admit that many of them could still be worn, despite the radical change in fashions introduced in 1947 with the "new look."

In 1948 Mrs. Millicent Rogers gave the Brooklyn Museum twenty-five dresses valued at a hundred thousand dollars, which had been created for her by Charles James. James contributed the paper patterns, which reveal the evolution of each design, as documents for students of fashion. The collection is kept in the section of historic costumes.

So ended my visit to a fabulous world in which the most varied factors are united to create elements that convey grace and beauty—from the scientific armies of du Pont to the zeal for organizing and winning justice of a Dubinsky, the dynamic genius of industrial magnates like Joseph Love, and the inspired creative talent of an authentic and complete artist like Charles James. ♦ ♦ ♦

# KNOW YOUR DOMINICAN NEIGHBORS?

Answers on page 47



1. Memorial to Christopher Columbus, now under construction in the Dominican Republic under auspices of the American Republics, is a school, lighthouse, theater, or airline terminal?

2. Workman twists one of country's leading export crops into long rolls. Is it spaghetti, manganese, tagua, or tobacco?



3. Ruins of the Church of St. Nicholas of Bari, built in 1503 to meet a pressing public need in Spain's program to colonize the New World. Was it the Hemisphere's first hospital, university, printing office, or observatory?



4. Hotel Jaragua, one of the finest in the Caribbean, draws tourists to Ciudad Trujillo, capital of the Dominican Republic. Do you know the city's former name?



5. The Ramfis Bridge, part of a highway in the Dominican Republic. Would you say that highways or railroads play the major role in the country's current scheme of transportation?



6. Ruins of palace built by Diego Columbus, son of the navigator, who, from 1509 to 1524, governed \_\_\_\_\_. The name is still applied to the entire island, now shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Fill in the blank.



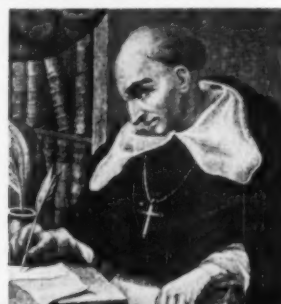
7. Río Haina sugar refinery also has port facilities. Would you say the Dominican Republic ranks high or low as a sugar exporter to the world?



8. Modern medical school at the national university, founded in 1538. Immunization in the Americas against what disease—susceptibility to which is determined by Schick test—was first made compulsory in the Dominican Republic?



9. When the country was the Hispanic culture center of the Americas, this friar attained everlasting fame for his writings there on behalf of the Indians against Spanish oppression. Who was he?



10. Couple performs Dominican national dance. Is it the *bambuco*, *jarabe tapatío*, *tango*, or *merengue*?



## JUAN RAMON AND I

(Continued from page 11)

our students, each with a lighted candle, caroling across the meadow up through the elm grove.

Then in the summer of '48—a glorious date in our lives—our residence papers, which had kept us back so long, were finally in order, and our dream of visiting other Spanish American countries at last came true. Juan Ramón was going to lecture first in Argentina, then in Uruguay, at the invitation of the "Anales" Society of Buenos Aires. This trip was a series of touching incidents one after another.

As we came into Uruguayan waters, some of our traveling companions who had a radio called to us excitedly: "Come, come, they're talking about Don Juan Ramón." He asked me to listen with them and try to find out the date of his first lecture. When I returned, I told him not only the date, but that it was to be in the Politeama Theater. Juan Ramón was nonplussed by this bit of information, since he had thought he would speak in a classroom or a small salon to a limited audience. The very idea of a theater terrified him. "At least," he said, in an effort to allay his misgivings, "it's probably a small theater." To which the reply was: "Well, the Teatro Colón is larger." I think that if he could have reversed his course at that moment, he would have flown straight back to Riverdale. Many more surprises awaited him.

Leaving the coastline of Uruguay behind, our ship entered the estuary, bound for Buenos Aires. Juan Ramón, impressed by the yellowish-brown color of the river, exclaimed: "Now I understand the walking on the waters." The dock came into view, and we could see a confused blot of people waiting. Some of those on board thought they recognized family and friends. Juan Ramón and I agreed on a procedure to follow in case no one was there to meet us. One would stay with the baggage, while the other went to telephone the Anales offices to find out which hotel we should go to. Juan Ramón, already tired from standing so much, went to take a last look around the stateroom, but I was much too excited to tear my eyes away from the approaching shore and stayed glued to the rail. The ship was maneuvering into position to tie up at the dock. I still couldn't make out faces clearly, when I heard a sort of chant: "Where is Juan Ramón? Where is Juan Ramón?" He appeared. Shouts of pure joy. Before the health and immigration officials were set up, some impetuous youngsters made their way up to the deck. Our hosts and some friends who knew of our arrival had to fight their way as best they could through the throng of students. Before setting foot in Buenos Aires, we knew we had found a second home. We separated and went to the hotel with different groups, and when we met at the Alvear, we exclaimed simultaneously: "How European everything is!"

We left our friends, new and old, to go up to our rooms for a minute and found another very welcome surprise. Flowers were everywhere—roses, carnations, daisies, tulips—really an extraordinary display, and most touching because the senders had guessed Juan Ramón's favorite color from his poems, and all the flowers were

yellow. These thoughtful details created an immediate and permanent bond of friendship with these people.

Two days later Juan Ramón gave his first lecture, in the much-feared Politeama Theater. I sat in a box, my heart pounding wildly. It has always seemed to me that I become much more excited than Juan Ramón under similar circumstances. I have never seen him really upset, except when he was sick and feared that the usual treatment might fail him. For an instant I was panicky when I saw him walk out on the stage. A hearty, prolonged burst of applause greeted him. Juan Ramón seemed surprised, but almost immediately went to the speaker's table to interrupt the ovation. As I have said, Juan Ramón always appears calm and collected on such occasions, but any sign of affection, admiration, or praise seems to make him blush inwardly, and he feels compelled to call a halt. For this same reason, he always tries to avoid lengthy introductions; he hates to stand listening to flattering overtures. At the end of the lecture, I started to run toward the stage, but soon realized that I'd have to go all the way around the theater to get to him. I finally arrived, after no little difficulty, only to find the stagehands setting up scenery for the evening performance. One said: "Madam, the crowd got over-enthusiastic, and now he's back there in a locked room." I again plunged into the sea of humanity, and someone told me that the door was opened to allow only fifteen persons to go in at a time. I was still far away and almost suffocating. No one knew who I was, so naturally they didn't make way for me. Just as I reached the limit of my endurance, I heard a friendly voice, very much in command of the situation, shouting to me: "Zenobia, do you need help? I have the car just outside." It was our friend López-Llausá, the Catalan editor whom I had last seen in our home in Madrid, before so many misfortunes had befallen Spain. Tall and robust, he was the best rescuer I could have had. I gave up all hope of seeing Juan Ramón, and, once the crowd realized who I was, a path was opened for me to flee to the haven of the waiting car.

López-Llausá took me to the Alvear to wait in comfort for Juan Ramón. (The newspaper account the next morning said that he had held up traffic for twenty minutes.) He finally came into the lobby, very much moved. "Touch this," he said, indicating the lapels and front of his coat. I did and, since it wasn't raining, was quite surprised to find them damp. Then he told us that one of a group of young girls waiting at the theater exit had rushed up and thrown her arms around him weeping. The girl clung to him, sobbing: "So many years! So many years! I've found you at last!" Looking at her, he wondered how such a young thing could speak of "so many years," until she told him that she had read *Platero* in school.

We stole a day from our itinerary to spend my birthday in Altigracia, where our dear friend Manuel de Falla had lived. The owners of the house graciously allowed us to come in when they knew the reason for our visit. We understood the attraction that this countryside had had for him; it was vaguely reminiscent of



Granada, though more open and joyful, less overpowering and grandiose.

We crossed the river into Uruguay. Why in heaven's name couldn't we have had just one free day to explore this land of small dimensions and overwhelming spirit? How can we ever forget that superb school where the children, all dressed in white (a delightful custom observed in both Argentina and Uruguay), gathered on a long wide stairway? They sang for us—and so beautifully—popular songs of Spain, as well as those of Uruguay. That is one of our most pleasant recollections of the whole trip. After the songfest, the director asked: "Does anyone have anything to say to Don Juan Ramón?" Several children—no doubt rehearsed to take part in the program—stepped forward. My attention was called to one little tyke, just about knee-high to a grasshopper, who was energetically beating his chest, repeating: "Me, me, me." The Director took it as a joke, but, noting my interest and more out of courtesy to me than faith in the lad, asked him: "And what have you to say?" To which the determined young man replied: "I want to recite 'La Púa.'" To please me, they put him up on a stool and gathered around in a circle. The boy cast a triumphant glance at his audience, raised his arm in an oratorical



*Throngs of cheering students surrounded the famous poet when he arrived in Buenos Aires*

gesture, and announced in stentorian tones: "La Púa." Suddenly his face clouded over, and the look of exultation was overshadowed by one of sheer anguish. Like a drowning man grabbing for the nearest salvation, he asked one of the little girls: "How does it begin?" On hearing the opening words, he took over and recited the first two or three lines without a hitch. But again he faltered and hopefully turned to a nearby teacher: "What's next?" He went on this way to the very end, with the spontaneous cooperation of half a dozen members of the group. It was a thoroughly delightful, unexpected number on our program.

We also recall with a great deal of satisfaction an afternoon spent in the friendly atmosphere of the Uruguayan Senate, where two women senators told me that in the House there were more than half a dozen feminine representatives. While we were observing the

proceedings on the floor, Senator Gallinal paid public tribute to Juan Ramón. This so flustered him that, instead of responding to the laudatory remarks, he ignominiously hid behind the group that was with us. We left Uruguay with a deep and abiding affection for the country, and hope to return some day to enjoy it in a more leisurely fashion.

Once more in Buenos Aires, just a few days before our departure for the United States, a gentleman extended us a kind invitation to a typical Argentine party in his home. He assured us that our friends would be more than welcome—"a dozen or more, whomever you may choose." He especially wanted Victoria Ocampo to come with us. Since we were sailing the morning after the party, we were delighted at the opportunity to get together with some of our friends before saying goodbye. However, Victoria said she couldn't come because she had a dinner engagement with a very cultured English lecturer, a former British diplomatic representative in Argentina.

We went in a three-car caravan to the estate on the outskirts of the city. Juan Ramón and I went in first to make the necessary introductions and were warmly greeted by our host. The gentleman took Juan Ramón's hand and presented him to his wife: "Don Juan Ramón Jiménez de Asúa." (The host was probably not clear as to whether he had invited Luis Ramón Jiménez de Asúa, another Spanish author living in Buenos Aires, or Juan Ramón Jiménez Mantecón.) Juan Ramón hastily interjected: "Jiménez is enough." But our hostess, taking this as modesty on his part, protested: "Now don't be foolish!" Turning to the other guests assembled in the salon, she intoned: "Don Juan Ramón Jiménez de Asúa." Juan Ramón, carried away by the ludicrous situation, took the arm of John Dos Passos, who was immediately behind him, and solemnly announced: "It is a pleasure to present my friend Pasos Largos" (an infamous outlaw of the Sierra de Córdoba). At just that moment our host, indicating the poet Alberti, discreetly inquired: "Did you say that gentleman is Mr. Pitigrilli?" Why contradict? Hilarity reigned and, for me, reached a climax when I thought I spotted the distinguished figure of Victoria Ocampo's supposed dinner guest. "That's Cunninghame-Graham," Juan Ramón told me. I went over to him and, without counting on the extreme courtesy of a British diplomat of the old school, jokingly remarked: "And to think Victoria couldn't come because you were dining with her!" Cunninghame-Graham looked soberly at his watch, indicated his disappointment at having to leave so early, and said: "Thank you so much for reminding me. This is such a delightful party that I would surely have been late." And off he went.

I passed the three-thousand-word limit long ago. I've rattled on and on, without even beginning the countless amusing anecdotes that come to mind. At times my pen has unconsciously run along toward other incidents that perhaps weren't so entertaining. I was fooling myself at the beginning, and a lot of memories that I thought were buried have come to the surface again. Forgive me. ♦ ♦ ♦



# ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

## Bananas from Ecuador

During 1952 Ecuador was the top-ranking banana exporter in the world. However, in 1953, because of floods in the producing areas, only 15.8 million bunches were exported, compared with 16.7 million in 1952.

Ecuador took advantage of the sharp drop in other exporting countries' banana production in 1948 to improve its position in the trade, and today bananas are its leading earner of foreign exchange. This single item constituted about 31 per cent of the country's total exports, by value, in 1953. More than 80 per cent of the bananas go to the United States, with Germany, Belgium, Sweden, France, and other European countries also offering promising markets.

The outlook for 1954 is encouraging, and it is hoped the export volume may surpass the 1952 record. Production is on an upward swing, and there is still a sizeable reserve of land suitable for growing the fruit.

The following table shows export values in thousands of dollars during the past seven years:

	Bananas	Total Exports
1947	1,729.8	43,024.0
1948	2,761.2	44,383.3
1949	4,944.2	31,218.5
1950	7,854.3	63,108.6
1951	11,252.0	55,395.0
1952	21,379.5	78,275.0
1953	24,528.7	74,662.3

## Inter-American Trade

The United States continues to provide about half the total imports of Latin America as a whole, although there have been changes in its relative position among suppliers of some of the individual countries. Latest reports indicate maintenance of the U. S. over-all trade position, despite inroads made by European and Asian competitors in certain lines.

The successful German campaign to capture markets in Latin America has been chiefly at the expense of other European countries.

U. S. imports from the twenty Latin American republics last year, incidentally, reached the record total of 3.4 billion dollars' worth. And for the first three months of this year they soared to 905 million dollars' worth, well above the quarterly average of 1953.

U. S. exports to Latin America in 1953 were valued at 2.9 billion dollars, and in the first quarter of 1954 they totaled 681 million, or just a shade under the figure for the corresponding period last year.

Mr. Marshall M. Smith, U. S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for International Affairs, in a recent address, hailed the efforts to increase inter-regional trade among

the various countries of the Caribbean. The Trade Promotion Conference for the Caribbean, held in Trinidad in April, was of most significance, he said, "because it represented the first attempt by the various national elements in the area to find ways and means for increasing on a cooperative basis the interchange of goods within the area as well as the trade of the area as a whole with the rest of the world. A study prepared by the Secretariat of the Commission in anticipation of the conference revealed the virtual absence of promotion to stimulate the export trade to new and expanded markets. This generalization, of course, does not apply to such products as sugar, petroleum, bauxite, and similar items which have had a well-organized distribution system for many years."

The conference urged both individual action by each country and joint cooperative efforts to promote the trade of particular products.

The Caribbean countries—Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic—with a total population of about eleven million, exported approximately 800 million dollars' worth of goods in 1953, but no more than twenty-two million dollars' worth went to Latin America.

## Argentine Plastics

In recent years the Argentine plastics industry has made outstanding progress, and currently various projects for the manufacture of new products are under consideration. More than 2,900 tons of plastic materials—thermosetting resins for the most part—were produced in 1953.

In Argentina today there are eight manufacturers—five on a large scale—of phenol-formaldehyde molding material. Production in 1953 was about 1,500 metric tons, a slightly greater volume than in 1952. The industry's present maximum capacity is estimated at 3,600 metric tons per year. The five biggest producers also make phenolic resins for other industrial uses.

In spite of the fact that local industry has the capacity to satisfy domestic demand for urea resins, used by the plywood, paint, and textile industries, until now it could not compete with the appreciably lower prices of imported materials. Consequently, the government has adopted a policy of curtailing imports of urea resins that will eventually allow the Argentine industry to increase its production to the point where it can meet all local requirements.

## Answers to Quiz on page 44

1. Lighthouse.
2. Tobacco.
3. Hospital.
4. Santo Domingo.
5. Highways (construction has been undertaken on a rather large scale, relegating railroads to second place).
6. Hispaniola.
7. High (tied for second with Formosa, according to the *Boletín Azucarero Mexicano*, June 1954. Cuba is first).
8. Diphtheria.
9. Bartolomé de las Casas.
10. Merengue.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

### WHAT HAPPENED TO ARGENTINA?

Dear Sirs:

I have just read in the April issue of AMERICAS Mr. Gómez-Sicre's interesting article on the São Paulo Biennial. It suggested some questions that I want to ask since I was unfortunately unable to visit that city as I had desired. The impressions of our correspondent, Mr. Carlos Mastronardi, were published in our number 85. Because these do not tally with yours in certain aspects, I would like you to clarify the contradictions I find between them.

You say that, with the exception of Brazil, exhibits from all the American countries represented "were sponsored by their respective governments or by government institutions." It was my understanding that the Argentine representation was not sponsored officially and that my compatriots' attendance (little enough on account of the absence of official backing) was due completely to their own initiative (according, at least, to our references). The "abstractions" that were incorporated as a group at the Biennial belonged to a special show, presented, if I remember correctly, in Rio de Janeiro. This is a significant angle that is made more important by your silence with regard to the presence of Argentine works. The unprepared reader, proceeding on the assumption that Argentina was fully represented, might draw his own conclusions upon not finding the slightest mention of their presence.

From Mr. Mastronardi's arguments, from the prize won by Hlito, I can deduce that our showing did not deserve to be ignored in this way. Understand me, friend Gómez-Sicre, that I am not trying to claim any recognition of quality for something simply because it is Argentine. Nothing is farther from my intention. What surprises me is that Argentine painting can be totally ignored in an article of the breadth of yours. I believe it is your duty, if the works of our country were not to your liking—since I agree beforehand to subscribe to 50 per cent of the criticisms you could make—to say so and not sacrifice to a badly understood continental brotherhood the existence of a painting that, you will agree with me, cannot be ignored today.

Carlos Spinedi  
Editorial Secretary  
Continente  
Belgrano 835  
Buenos Aires, Argentina

*Mr. Gómez-Sicre explains that he did not mention Argentina in his article, because, when he went to the opening of the Biennial, the Argentine pictures were not there. He left Brazil without any news of their arrival.*

### NEWS FOR US

Dear Sirs:

Since I consider AMERICAS a publication to which many readers and writers refer for source material, I would like to call something to your attention. I was surprised to find an error in question number two of the quiz, "Know Your Colombian Neighbors?" which appeared on page forty-seven of the June issue. Cali is not one of the principal agriculture areas of the Cauca Valley.

Palmira is the farming capital of the Cauca Valley and seat of agriculture in Colombia, and it is not even included in your questions. The Government has established the best agricultural experiment station in the country here and one of the most up-to-date agronomy schools, so it is correctly called "the larder of Colombia." There research is carried on in adaptation and improvement of such crops as sugar cane, cacao, cotton, rice, and fruit. Many of our important agricultural problems have been solved in Palmira.

Mario Soto Borrero  
Facultad de Agronomía  
Palmira, Colombia

*AMERICAS salutes reader Soto for his pride in his home town, but points out that the question under fire merely states that Colombia's fourth largest city is located in the fertile Cauca Valley, one*

*of the country's foremost agricultural areas. No mention is made of the agricultural capital of the province, but, on Mr. Soto's recommendation, we'll settle for Palmira.*

### COMING ATTRACTION

Dear Sirs:

Here is a preview for your readers of the San Francisco World Trade Center Authority exhibition, scheduled to open next fall—a permanent display of foreign industry and travel opportunities. The exhibition will be located in the world famous Ferry Building and will cover almost an entire block along the waterfront at the foot of Market Street, an area known as the Embarcadero, the maritime port of San Francisco.

Here the many friendly countries of the world are setting up exhibits to acquaint local residents, the traveling public, and the younger generation with their contemporary activities. As a veteran international hotel and restaurant management consultant, I am presenting the leading Latin American hotels. We are working now on two connecting rooms. The first will have a tropical setting colorfully lighted and maintained by expert landscape gardeners. The other room, or club lounge, will have a miniature theater where Latin American films will be shown and lectures given, together with other forms of entertainment. There will also be a library of current Hemisphere newspapers, magazines, industrial publications, and government pamphlets. Coffee will be served to visitors, and we hope to be able to cover the walls with Latin American art and offer other innovations that will help depict life in the Americas.

Leonard N. Ellis  
Sausalito, California

### MAIL BAG

The following correspondents, in search of pen pals throughout the Hemisphere, have asked AMERICAS to publish their names and addresses. Readers requesting this service must print their names and addresses clearly and state at least two language preferences. These are shown below by the initials after the name.

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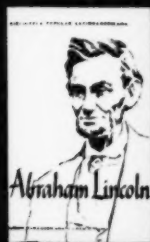
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Inside back cover A. Zorrilla

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